

Southern Belle.

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Southern Belle.

by [Sweaty_dogman](#)

Summary

Will blinked, heart slowing. His parents were...giving up on him. His parents no longer wanted him. Will looked over at his mother, tears welling in his fiery eyes.

Doctor Hannibal Lecter finds himself with more than a handful when a young man is sent his way. Will Graham, sent to rectify his truly rotten behaviour, is a force to be reckoned with Doctor Lecter comes to find.

Despite his harsh, rude and vicious shell...Will finally grants Hannibal the privilege of seeing past such a hard exterior. However, the privilege doesn't come easily.

Notes

Hello!

This is my first period piece so i hope its enjoyable! Again, this has not been proof read and the following chapters will not be proof read either, so I apologise for any errors <3

Chapter One.

"We cannot do this anymore, William." Will pursed his lips. That *wasn't* his name, just something his father enjoyed calling him when he'd been particularly rotten. Once again, Will had been caught stealing alcohol and a case of cigarettes from his mothers purse.

Caught red handed. For the hundredth time. His father had warned him something would happen if he was caught again, but Will didn't think the man would follow up on his threats.

"Father!-" Will protested, standing up out of his seat.

"No! Sit back down, William. You *will* listen to me until I am done talking. This behaviour is truly disgusting, your mother and I cannot take it any longer." He chides, shaking his head. Will couldn't help but stare at the man's moustache as he talked, holding back a chuckle as it wiggled. *Not now.* "We are sending you away. Until your behaviour has been rectified, you will be spending your days in the North."

Will blinked, heart slowing. His parents were...giving up on him. His parents no longer wanted him. Will looked over at his mother, tears welling in his fiery eyes.

The Lecter Estate.

Will swallowed, nodding at the driver as he picked up his bags. The journey had been long, cold and wet, raining the whole way. *How fitting* . The house before him was gigantic, much bigger than any house in the south - surprisingly.

It was common knowledge that the South enjoyed things large and dramatic, showcasing their riches to everybody that drove past. The home before him would be any Southern belles dream - but not Will. He hated the sight of Doctor Lecter's home. Hated it. The sight revolted

him, filling his mouth with a bitter taste as he walked up the marble stairs. He knocked once, waiting for someone to answer.

"Mr Graham." A deep, accented voice rang out as soon as a maid opened the door. Will stepped inside, bright eyes drifting. *Chandeliers. Spiral staircases. Paintings. Gold. Silver. Servants. Marble.* The Mansion reeked of pretentiousness, a clear act for Doctor Lecter to show off his riches. "Glad to see you have finally made it. I was worried you might be lost."

Will hummed in response, not meeting Hannibal's dark eyes. The man didn't deserve it. "The driver you sent was quite slow." He replied bluntly.

The older man looked at the boy, brows knitted together. Part of him couldn't believe such a cherubic, dainty boy could be as wicked as his parents described. Will looked soft; cheeks rosy, nose round and sweet, curls dark and unruly. What was so vile about a young man dressed in a hand-knitted sweater vest? How could Will be such a despicable young man? However, his answer was quickly found when Will dropped his suitcases on Hannibal's feet.

Without another word, Will disappeared up the stairs, not looking at the man as he went. He took himself up to the third floor, poking his head into every room as he walked past. Will assumed Hannibal had picked a room out for him, probably close to his own so he could observe the boy...Will wouldn't have that. Eventually, he found a rather large room right at the back of the house. A guest room. It was large and spacious, curtains shielding the king-sized bed. Will loved his privacy.

"Your bags, Mr Graham." An unfamiliar voice sounded from outside his door, followed by a knock. Will groaned, padding to the door to open it, offering a tight smile to the red-faced servant. The multiple flights of stairs must have knocked the wind out of the poor man. Will couldn't be mad at him or anyone else working for the older man, they hadn't sent him here.

"Thank you, sir." Will took them, nodding at the man.

"Doctor Lecter would like you to join him for Dinner this evening. At seven, no later." He hummed, smiling at the boy before taking his leave. Will closed the door, rolling his eyes before beginning to put his items away. He set up a picture of his parents on the bedside table, sighing heavily. He resented them, anger bubbling in his stomach as he looked at the black and white photo of his parents - happy and jolly. Will hated them for that. How dare they even think about being happy when they just sent their own flesh and blood away. They had given up on Will for good.

After changing into a thickly knitted jumper, Will took himself down the stairs and into the dining hall. Much like the rest of the house, the dining hall was vast, decorated to match the rest of the home. Doctor Lecter was seated at the head of the table, already eating his meal. Will was late, a whole fifteen minutes past the arranged time.

"Mr. Graham." Hannibal hummed, gesturing for Will to take a seat. "Now, I don't quite understand the routine of your home, but here, you are to stick to times and plans." The man continued, voice stern and even. "If you fail to stick to *my* given routine, you will have consequences. For example, you are late to dinner and therefore, you will be going to bed on an empty stomach."

Will raised a brow, shaking his head. "You mean I am to go hungry, simply because it's now seven and a quarter?" He scoffed, scowling at the older man.

"It will remind you that dinner is at seven in the evening, not seven and a quarter. If you wish to not go hungry, you'll keep that in mind, no?" Hannibal smiled, cutting his helping of lamb. It looked and smelt delicious; the meat was soft and juicy, vegetables wonderfully cooked. Will would die for a good meal, all he had eaten was bread and butter on the ride.

The young man huffed, getting to his feet before exiting the dining hall. He padded into the large kitchen, making sure he was completely alone before dipping his fingers into the forbidden food. Will plopped a piece of meat into his mouth with a soft moan before grabbing the plate and scurrying off upstairs. Hannibal wasn't going to starve him, not if he had anything to do with it.

With his still-warm plate of meat and vegetables, Will took a seat on his bed and opened up a book. He ate with his fingers, laying on his stomach as he lost himself in the pages and words.

The missing plate of food didn't go unnoticed by Hannibal. He tutted, filing away the information for the next morning. Will had already proven himself a handful, not only hurting Hannibal's feet, but also stealing from his kitchen. He could only imagine what the young man had in store for Hannibal in the coming months of his stay. Hannibal swore to rectify that, eager to hand back a well-behaved, kind boy back to his family in the south.

Falling asleep with a stomach full of warm, tasty food was good - only if his slumber hadn't been horrific. Will slipped into a long nightgown, crawling under the dark sheets with a tired sigh, eyes fluttering closed. To begin with, sleep found him quite easily, dreams pleasant and hazy. After a while, his sleep turned uncomfortable, tossing and turning in annoyance until he snapped awake.

Will groaned softly, slipping through the curtains surrounding his bed. He slid into a pair of slippers, opening up a drawer to locate his metal case of cigarettes and matches. The whole house was silent, only the soft patter of rain hitting the roof and windows as Will crept through the halls. Will wasn't stupid enough to smoke on his own balcony, aware the smell of smoke may stick to his clothing and bedroom decor.

He slipped onto the balcony, sighing happily. Now, Will could watch the rain as it fell from the blanket that was night, silver and quick against the darkness. Sliding the cigarette between his lips, Will sparked up a match and watched the cigarette spark to life. *Home*. Cigarettes always reminded Will of home. Of his mother smoking, her cigarette lit up on the end of a holder, held between her dainty fingers that were always painted red.

He watched the smoke curl around itself, falling from Will's lips slowly. Will played with the ribbon on his nightgown, lost in the memories of his parents and his home. He became so lost that he failed to notice the sound of footsteps and Hannibal's figure watching him from the French doors.

"You are up rather late, Mr Graham." Hannibal broke the silence, surprised that the boy didn't jump out of his skin. Will looked...angelic. His nightgown fell down to Will's ankles, covering his pale, blushed body wonderfully. Although the nightgown caused Will to be

shapeless, Hannibal couldn't help but imagine how he'd look in a fitted dress. How gorgeous. Hannibal blinked, shutting down the thoughts as he raised a brow.

"I'm glad you can see without your glasses." Will quipped, flicking ash onto the ground. "If I had wanted the obvious to be pointed out to me, I would have asked." He grumbled, taking another long drag, narrowing his eyes at the older man. Hannibal crossed his arms, standing his ground.

"If you are unable to sleep, then busy yourself. Breakfast with be at half past five, you can go and begin the preparation." Hannibal hummed, keeping his voice quiet as to not wake any of the servants.

Will rolled his eyes, blowing out the smoke with a little sigh. The young man didn't quite feel like chopping or cooking quite so early - the sun wasn't even up yet. "Would you like me to cook just so you can starve me again?-"

"Again?" Hannibal interrupted, lip quirking into a smile. "Mr Graham, do not take me as a fool. I'm more than aware of your little indiscretion. You think I wouldn't notice a missing plate?" The man tutted, shaking his head.

"There's no need to get sore, Doctor Lecter." Will chuckled, leaning forward to throw his butt from the balcony, brushing past Hannibal with a small scoff. "Do not wait for me at breakfast. I'm afraid I won't be able to make it." He called sarcastically, unruly curls bouncing as he walked. The older man let out a huff, adjusting his evening robe before heading inside. If Will wanted to be difficult, so be it.

The first month went just as Hannibal had expected. Awfully. Will constantly talked back, allowing his vicious and bitter tongue to controll his mouth and thoughts, shooting venom at Hannibal every chance he got.

He was late to breakfast, afternoon tea and supper without fail, waltzing in when he so pleased. During the day, Will busied himself by taking long walks, ignoring Hannibals

requests to join him for reading sessions, horse riding or tutoring. Instead, Will would take a horse and ride into the woods, stolen bottles of sweet wine tucked away in his bag, emptied by the time Will returned.

Soon, he'd found himself a small group of unfavourables to spend his time with. Hannibal disapproved of many of his friends children, finding that they were polite in the presence of their parents, but rotten behind that mask. The thought of Will Graham socialising with the likes of Matthew Brown, Randall Tier and Beverly Katz drove Hannibal truly mad. Will was here to better himself, not to fill his life with filth.

Hannibal found himself furious when Will arrived home, in the middle of the night, smelling as strong as a skunk. If the scent didn't give it away, Will's appearance certainly did. He was drunk and had clearly been smoking, hair a mess, clothes scruffy.

"Where on earth have you been, Mr Graham!?" Hannibal barked, arms crossed over his chest. The man was still dressed, having been unable to retire without knowing Will was home and in safe hands. "It is a quarter past one in the morning. I am quite sure we discussed your curfew last Saturday."

Will chuckled, pulling off his coat messily. His coordination was off, signalling to Hannibal just how intoxicated the boy seemed to be. "I have been with some chums." Will smiled, rubbing his eyes with a yawn. "You really must work on not getting so sore, Doctor Lecter. Not to worry, Matthew and I brought no harm to anyone." He drawled, southern sweetness clinging to his drunken words.

The older man swallowed, throat closing up for just a moment. *He couldn't let his mind cloud now.* "And on how many occasions have I told you that Mr Brown is no good? You have been here a month and two weeks, Mr Graham. I would not be privy to transferring you to someone else, much further away from your parents." Hannibal ground out, grabbing Will by his arm. "Mr Brown is nothing more than a goon. We will discuss your punishment tomorrow, get to your room."

"You are nothing but...but," Will hiccupped, pulling away from the man harshly. "But a failin' head Doctor, you are so engorged in yourself!" The boy huffed, clumsily making his way up the stairs to his bedroom. How dare Hannibal! How dare the man judge the people *he* chose to surround himself with. To him, Matthew was nice and fun to be around, unlike the uptight

Doctor. He slammed his door, locking it as he yelled incoherent insults at the man -who probably couldn't hear.

Hannibal sighed to himself as he finally retired to his own bedroom.

This was going to be much harder than Hannibal Lecter had anticipated.

Chapter Two.

Will sighed deeply, taking a seat in the library. The older man had insisted Will take up at least three hours of study during his stay. *'An educated man makes a well mannered man.'* He would say as Will rolled his eyes and flicked open his book. Will didn't mind learning so much, he simply did not enjoy being told what to do.

"Are you implying people that cannot afford education are *goons*? That they are not on the same level as you or I?" Challenged the young man, raising his thin brow at the man. Will rested his feet on the desk, leaning back as he flicked through the pages of his English book. "I understand people like us are often classist and see those less fortunate than us as nothing but dirt. But, to judge someone's character based solely on their education status, now that is truly disgusting, Doctor Lecter."

Hannibal blinked, using two fingers to remove Will's feet from the dark mahogany. "It is truly amazing what you think you might have inferred from what I said, when simply it was just an observation." Hannibal hummed, taking a seat in his own leather chair. "I have no prejudice when it comes to those of a lesser status than I, and would never come to the conclusion that their character is poor solely on their education or background. I'd be a fool to do such a thing."

"Why? Because then you couldn't use desperate people to your advantage? You couldn't hire and fire them as you so pleased." Will quipped in return, his comebacks quick and well thought out. Hannibal simply tutted, no longer wishing to entertain the argument that Will was clearly searching for. The young man huffed, deciding to continue with his work. Hannibal didn't deserve to converse with him.

After finishing the book Hannibal had given to him, Will got to his feet and spaded around the large library, books stacked floor to ceiling. He hummed, fingers grazing over each spine, taking in the title and authors of each book. Hannibal could see him in the corner of his eyes, dainty fingers dusting leather as his unruly curls bounced ever so slightly. It had been almost three months since Will's arrival to the Lecter Estate and Hannibal felt as though the boy was ready to meet people outside of the house - respectable people.

"We are going to be attending a ball tomorrow evening at the Chilton Manor." Hannibal announced, leaving no room for Will to deny or accept, simply telling the boy his plans. "We shall be leaving at six to arrive in time for a dance and dinner. Doctor Chilton is a colleague

of mine and a good friend, your behaviour must be on par, Mr Graham.” He continued, getting to his feet with a small sigh. Although Fredrick Chilton wasn’t exactly one of Hannibal’s favorite people in the world, the man’s parties were always lavish and the food was always brilliant. “You are to be bathed and dressed nicely by five tomorrow...and do something with those wild locks of yours.”

“A ball?” Will couldn’t stop his lip from twisting into a small smile at that. Back home, Will had loved attending parties. The whole getting ready and enjoying the night always made the young man feel much lighter. Perhaps, Will might enjoy himself for once. “As long as I am not made to stand by your side all night, then I will join you.” He made no promises to be on his best behaviour before he exited the library, calmly making his way to the bedroom, eager to pick himself an outfit. He looked through the collection of suits his father had sent him away with, turning his nose up at each and every one. They were wonderfully made, most being handcrafted by the town's tailor, but Will didn’t feel much like wearing a suit. He wanted to make an impression. He wanted everyone at that Ball to remember the name *Will Graham*. To remember him even when he returned home.

He had the perfect outfit. One that he was sure would turn heads and stop hearts.

Just as instructed, Will had a long bath in the early morning once his tutoring was over. He filled it to the brim with luxurious smelling soaps, enjoying the way they rolled and bubbled in the claw foot tub. Will relaxed for a while, listening to the record that he had put on, deciding to wash himself once the room filled with the comforting sound of static. He washed his body with vanilla scented soaps, lathering his curls with the same wonderful smelling soap. Once he was squeaky clean, Will climbed out of the tub, wrapping himself in a robe. He gasped softly when a soft knock sounded from the bathroom door.

“Hello?” Will called as he padded across the cold marble, hand resting on the door knob.

“Mr Graham?” A female voice called in response, soft and sweet. He recognised it to be one of the house maids he’d met once or twice. “It’s Georgia, if you’d like to call me as such.”

He opened the door, smiling softly at the young maid. She was no older than twenty-two. “Georgia. Is everything okay?” Will raised a thin brow, collecting his clothes to throw them

down the laundry shoot.

“Everything is wonderful. Doctor Lecter sent me up to see if you needed any assistance in getting ready? He would have sent a male house staff, but they are busy tending to other matters. I hope you don’t feel put off by that.” She smiled, brushing a strand of blonde hair from her face. Will didn’t mind at all, he much preferred the company of women, finding them easier to get along with.

Will smiled, taking the woman’s arm as they walked to his bedroom. “I think I would like your help, Georgia. It has been a long while since I applied makeup, perhaps you can help me?” The young woman smiled, almost jumping at the chance to do Will’s makeup. There was no doubt that Will was handsome, but the young man was better described as *beautiful, pretty*. It wasn’t often she got to enjoy time with someone that wasn’t a colleague, even if Hannibal was a wonderful employer.

She guided Will into a chair, smiling happily as she plucked a tube of lipstick from his vanity. “My mother always taught me that less is more. She always said to use lipstick as both blush, and what it’s intended for... it gives a far more natural look.” Georgie hummed, applying dabs of soft red to her finger tips.

“Your mother is very smart. Do you miss her?” Will asked, closing his eyes as the woman began working the lipstick into his fair skin.

“I do. Doctor Lecter allows us to visit during the month of Christmas and thrice more throughout the year, more if a family member is ill.” She hummed, a fond smile covering her lips as he talked. “I write to my mother often. I hate to pry...but I’m yet to see letters arrive for you.”

Will sighed softly, eyes fluttering open. “My father informed me that for the first year, I will not be receiving any communication from them apart from my birthday and the winter season. I miss them... but they did send me away.” He looked at himself in the mirror, smiling. His cheeks were now tinted a rosy pink, the shin in the lipstick offering a dewy look to his skin. “Your mother truly is a babe. My blush compact has never done this...” he marvelled, chuckling softly. Georgia blushed, nodding at the sweet compliment. It confused her, how Will could be so cold and harsh to Doctor Lecter, but a sweetheart to her.

She dusted his lips with the same shade, using scented oil as a gloss. “Now...let me see that suit you are wearing!” Georgie beamed, hands clasped together.

“Actually,” he stood, sauntering over to the large wardrobe, pulling out a dress. It was gorgeous, handmade with pride. It was a rich red shade. The dress had a black sheer layer, ruffled to add the most flattering shape imaginable, dripping with pearlescent jewels and crystals. The layering of materials created a deep brown effect, almost matching Will’s wild curls beautifully. It was truly a garment to be envious of, fit for the most regal name in town. To match, Will had found a pair of silk, elbow length gloves to compliment his pale skin, and a heart shaped locket gifted to him from his mother. “I’m going to wear this. It belonged to my mother, she handed it down to me...she had worn it on one of my parents many dates.”

“It’s gorgeous, Mr Graham.” Georgia gasped, daring to touch the finer details on the dress. The young woman had never seen such a dress, even at Balls she had attended or worked. It was truly one to remember. “You are going to be the belle of the ball, I can promise you that. Would you like for me to help you in to it?” She offered with a smile. Will nodded, handing the dress up before he dropped his robe, unashamed to be naked before the woman.

He pulled on a pair of black, silk panties and sheer stockings, humming softly. “Thank you, Georgia. You may call me Will... it feels impersonal calling me that. We are friends.” He smiled, turning to face the blushing young woman. She nodded in return, taking the dress from its hanger, holding it as if it were the finest china. Soon, Georgia zipped up the back as Will pulled on his white gloves, finding himself a dainty ring to slip over his finger.

The woman stepped back, taking a moment to admire Will’s beautiful form in the dress. She smiled, scurrying off to the vanity to collect a few things. “Turn around for me. I’d like to do your hair for you.” She hummed. Will obeyed, smoothing out the dress as he turned, bending down a little for the woman. Georgia taped his shoulders once she was done, sliding in one final pin. “There. Perfect.”

Will chuckled, walking over to the full body mirror. He sighed, smiling brightly at the reflection that greeted him. His hair had been secured in an elegant bun, strands of dark curls falling into his rosy face perfectly. If Will knew any better, he would’ve sworn his mother was standing in the mirror. “Georgia... I look like Norma Shearer!”

“Better than Norma Shearer.” Georgie chuckled, placing a necklace around Will’s slender neck. “Run along now. It’s time for you and Doctor Lecter to be on your way.” He nodded,

placing a friendly kiss on the woman's cheek before almost skipping out of the room. Will felt amazing, it had been a painfully long time since Will had truly enjoyed himself in Hannibal's home. Now, he had a friend he didn't have to sneak out to visit.

Hannibal tapped his foot against the marble flooring, looking at the slim watch on his wrist. If Will took any later, they would be embarrassingly late. Hannibal had chosen to wear a dark brown, three-piece suit. He had his dark hair slicked back, round glasses perched on the bridge of his nose. Usually, Hannibal didn't wear his glasses out, but he enjoyed the air of sophistication it gave him. The sound of heels clicking on the floor pulled him from his thoughts, gazing over at the stairs curiously.

His jaw almost hit the floor as his guest emerged from around the corner, clad in a gorgeous gown. He blinked slowly, the air stolen from his lungs at the sight. *Will had chosen a dress.* It was the most elegant thing he had ever seen, clearly from the previous decade in style. It was vintage, however it did not look old. He swallowed thickly, letting out a shaky breath as Will made his way down the large staircase, gloves hands lifting his dress slightly to make walking easier.

"Doctor Lecter. I told you I would be on time. It is very rare the Graham's ever miss a good Ball." Will chimed, standing before the man now. Closer up, Hannibal could see the soft makeup that graced Will's naturally beautiful face. His cheeks were soft and dewy, blush reaching up to his brows to accentuate his round cheekbones, lips glossy and plump. It puzzled Hannibal that a boy so rotten and soundly tight, could be so beautiful and sweet looking. Will looked like something straight out of a painting.

Hannibal cleared his throat, smoothing out his suit as casually as he could. "Yes. It is nice to see you on routine for once. If you would like to follow me out to the car, we can begin our journey." Hannibal nodded, gesturing to the door. He headed outside, holding open the car door for Will out of politeness, helping him into the car with a soft sigh.

For the journey, Hannibal remained silent. He couldn't think of much to say, his thoughts running wild with the image of Will in his dress. The memory played over, again and again in his mind, picturing Will walking down the staircase. The curls in his face, lips soft and glossy, necklace decorating his collarbones. Everything about Will was beautiful. Eventually, after Hannibal prayed to God for the journey to quicken, they arrived at the Manor.

Extravagantly dressed couples walked inside, chatting happily to one another as they walked.

“Here we are,” Hannibal hummed, watching as the driver opened their doors for them. Will climb out, eyes flitting over the large home. It wasn’t as large or impressive as Hannibal’s home, but he assumed it wasn’t an estate like Hannibal’s was. “Fredrick Chilton may be a handful to begin with, but he is nothing more than a twitchy man.” Hannibal hummed lowly to the boy as they made their way inside. “You *must* refer to him as Doctor Chilton, or he gets very...uptight.”

Will nodded, walking closely. Unknowingly, the pair appeared to be a couple to the other guests. Their matching attire and close proximity brought them to that conclusion, shocking most guests to the core. It wasn’t shocking that Hannibal Lecter had a young man on his sleeve, but that he had anyone on his sleeve at all. It had been a long time since anyone had seen Hannibal with a partner, or anyone he seemed to be intertwined with. The guests became curious even before the pair entered the dance hall, smiling widely at the short host.

“Doctor Lecter!” Fredrick beamed, resting on his walking stick. His eyes flitted to the young babe by Hannibal’s side, blinking slowly. Whoever this young man was, he was gorgeous. Fredrick had never seen such a babe before. Will’s plan to make people remember him was already in full swing. “It is wonderful to see you again! Come now, don’t fail to introduce me to your lover!” He chuckled, banging his walking stick on the floor as he laughed and gestured at Will.

The young man’s cheeks lit up, blush flooding down his neck to his exposed flesh. “Oh,” Will laughed softly, shaking his head as he reached out to shake the host’s hand. “Doctor Lecter and I aren’t romantically involved. I am to stay with him for the next three years to further my educational status.” He smiled, nodding slowly. “It is wonderful to meet you, Mr Chilton.” Will purposely didn’t use the man’s correct title simply to see how he would react. The older man pursed his lips, physically cringing at the words.

He faked a smile, nodding at Will as the boy smiled wickedly. Hannibal almost frowned as Will spoke, finding his stomach flipping in a way that it never had before. He was quick to realise that Hannibal was *hurt* by what Will had said. It was clear that the young man and himself were not romantically involved, but Hannibal couldn’t help but imagine himself with

the boy. Will wasn't interested in Hannibal, that was clear. But it hurt the older man no less, making him feel sick and unwanted. The older man smiled before excusing himself to get a drink with Fredrick.

Now alone, Will was unsure of what to do unlike at home, Will didn't know a single body in the room other than Hannibal. He looked around, offering charming smiles to people he made eye contact with. A few guests introduced themselves to Will, smiling warmly as they shook his hand or pulled him into a polite embrace. It didn't take long for Will to become comfortable, laughing and chatting to guests.

Hannibal watched on from the bar, trying to listen to the conversation he had been pulled into. Fredrick and Bedelia talked, their voices buried in the back of Hannibal's mind, truly focused on the young boy that floated around the room. He watched Will talk, touch, laugh and smile with people that weren't him. It was bizarre, he had guessed that Will would be glued to his side, unwelcoming and cold to the other guests as well as Hannibal - but Will had proven to be the opposite. His eyes narrowed as a young man approached Will, bowing politely at Will.

"You must be Will Graham." He smiled, offering his hand to the young boy, he brought Will's hand to his lips, pressing a kiss to the glove. "You are quite the topic of conversation tonight. I'm sure Fredrick Chilton is more than upset he isn't the star of his own show." He chuckled, watching as Will's cheeks shone with blush.

"Oh my," Will chuckled, shaking his head. "Mr Chilton is nothing more than a chump, his disapproval doesn't bother me." He smiled, looking up at the man through his cow lashes, fluttering them flirtatiously. "And what is your name?"

Randall laughed, enjoying the boy's informal language. "Has anyone ever told you that you have quite the quick tongue? I'm Randall Tier. I was hoping you might do the honour of dancing with me?" He flashed a charming smile, offering up his arm for the gorgeous young man. Will gladly took it, following him to the bustling dance floor. Randall was a smooth talker, polite and sweet... but he wasn't enough to fully interest Will.

The pair danced and talked flirtatiously, Randall's hands placed on his hips, Will's arms draped around the young man's neck. "You are beautiful, William." Randall purred, unaware that wasn't Will's full name. Unaware of just how much it drove the young man up the wall. Instead of reacting poorly, Will simply beamed,

“Why thank you, Randall. I must say, you are quite handsome yourself.” Will cooed in response, letting out a loud giggle when the other man pressed a soft kiss to his blushing cheeks.

Hannibal watched from his position across the hall, throat tight as he saw Randall kiss his cheek. Will didn’t deserve to be kissed by such a young man. A teenager. A boy. Will deserved to be kissed by someone that wasn’t simply interested in personal motives. In, no doubt, sex and titles. Hannibal swallowed his drink in one swift gulp, politely requesting for his glass to be filled once again. He felt hot, clothes clinging to his skin as he watched the scene unfold before him.

“You must give me your number,” Will continued, running a gloved hand up the young man's arm, smiling. “I am afraid Fredrick Chilton may not invite me over again.” He chuckled, pocketing the piece of paper Randall handed to him.

After what felt like an eternity, dinner was announced and Will was back in Hannibal’s presence once more. He pulled out the boy’s chair, pushing it back in when the young man was seated. Although their time together had been small, Hannibal couldn’t help but smell Randall Tier on Will’s dress.

“I see you have made quite the impression tonight, Mr Graham.” Hannibal spoke, breaking the silence between them. “I thought I told you to refer to Doctor Chilton correctly. I’m afraid you cannot depend on your charm forever, you are lucky that he finds you to be such.”

Will’s light and happy mood flattered at that, his smile dropping from his glossy lips. “I would apologise for my impolite behaviour. However, I’m sure you would not appreciate it much. It seems you appreciate very little, Doctor Lecter.” He almost barked, sipping on his glass of water. Hannibal had ensured Will had no alcohol that night. “Perhaps you ought to not talk to me for the rest of the night so that we can ensure I make no more mistakes, hm?”

“Mr Graham.” Hannibal whispered sternly as plates were placed before them. The food looked wonderful, as if it were made by the best culinary experts to live. It tasted just as

wonderful, melting in Will's mouth as he sighed softly around his fork. Will continued to chatter with the guests, talking to Randall from across the table, smiling sweetly at the young man. Randall seemed to adore Will, unable to take his eyes away from the southern belle as they talked, taking in his whole form.

"It was wonderful to see you again, Doctor." Fredrick smiled, shaking Hannibal's hand as he showed them the front door, bidding all his guests a goodnight. "And it was wonderful to meet you, Will Graham. I must have you over again sometime." The man winked, enveloping Will in a friendly hug.

"Wonderful to meet you too, *Doctor* Chilton." The way Will said that, southern drawl clinging to his words, made Hannibal's blood boil. Why didn't Will sound as sweet and friendly when he spoke to him? What did Fredrick have that Hannibal didn't? The older man sighed, leading Will out to the waiting car.

Hannibal hoped to make conversation on the drive home, but within seconds of sliding into the car, Will was fast asleep. It was almost midnight, there was no doubt the boy was exhausted from their night of music, dancing and dinner. The warm meal must have caused Will to feel drowsy. Hannibal took this chance to watch Will, admiring the way his lips parted gently as he slept, soft snores filling the car as their driver made his way home. Will looked gentle and innocent, long lashes fluttering as his breathing softened and slowed. He wanted to reach out. Reach out and brush away the curls from his guest's face, tucking them behind his sweet ears. He'd die to know how soft Will's skin truly was, how it felt against his slightly calloused fingers.

He was quickly pulled from his thoughts as the car came to a stop and Will snapped awake, letting out a chuckle at the realisation. He'd fallen asleep. Will shook his head, yawning loudly before getting out of the car, holding his dress as he padded inside. *God forbid they have a tender moment.* Hannibal thanked and tipped the driver a twenty before heading inside himself, locking the front door behind him.

"Goo—" Hannibal went to speak, turning around to find himself alone. Will had taken the elevator up to the floor his bedroom was on, too tired to take the several flights of stairs. The older man grumbled, muttering to himself as he took himself to bed, a sour mood clinging to him.

Something about Randall Tier and Will Graham together made the Doctor itch, causing his stomach to flip and ache as he tried to fall asleep.

Sleep came easy for only one of them that night.

Chapter Three.

Chapter Notes

Again...no proofreading <3

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Tossing and turning, Hannibal was unable to find sleep that night. His mind raced, replaying the memory of Will walking down the stairs, his hair pinned in a neat bun, clad in the most beautiful gown imaginable. He thought about their accidental matching, how many guests must have come to the conclusion that they were intertwined. That Will was his.

Then, his thoughts soured as he remembered Randall Tier and their romantic interaction. The way Randall fumbled as he danced, stepping on Will's toes, hands resting just a little too low on his hips. Randall Tier was nothing but a boy, uneducated in the art of courting someone as sweet and beautiful as Will Graham. He didn't know how rotten the boy was, what made him tick or the things that he enjoyed. With a sigh, Hannibal pulled himself out of bed, pulling on a robe. He silently made his way through the house, finding himself in the kitchen by the end of his restless stroll.

By now, the sun was due to rise and breakfast would be served soon, but the attempt at sleeping would be nothing but fruitless now. He brewed himself a cup of herbal tea, adding in honey before he took a sip, relaxing as the hot liquid slid down his throat. He knew his attraction to Will was unwarranted, and that the boy was nothing but rotten on the inside. Will was here to be punished, to learn from his mistakes and become a better man by the end of it. If Hannibal didn't become stricter and better his strategies, Will would only get more out of hand.

Pushing aside his feelings, Hannibal finished off his mug of tea and headed to his drawing room. This routine of self pitying had to end, for the greater good.

“Good morning, Georgia!” Will chimed, arriving for breakfast on time for the first time since he had arrived. It had been over a week since the Ball, and Will hadn’t failed to notice Hannibal’s peculiar behaviour. He took his seat, smiling at the maid kindly.

“Good morning, Will. It’s nice to see you at the table for once...breakfast is always better when it is fresh.” She chuckled, setting down a plate of cut toast before the boy. Will’s stomach rumbled hungrily, picking up the toast to lather on a thick layer of salted butter. Usually, his mother would cook sweet cinnamon toast, but Will was beginning to get used to forgetting his old routine. It had been months since he’d heard from his parents and Christmas was soon approaching - he could only hope they’d write him.

The boy hummed pleasantly, chewing on his third slice of toast. “I suppose you’re right. The toast is crunchy, opposed to soft and cold.” He laughed, flashing her a sweet smile. Georgia seemed to enjoy Will’s company as much as he enjoyed hers. She would often join the boy in his bedroom, assisting him in getting dressed for the day so they could chatter.

“I’m afraid I’m not employing you to make idle conversation, ma’am.” Hannibal’s voice distrusted the happy air in the room, causing Georgia to gas softly. Much like the past week, Hannibal wore a grouchy expression, brows knitted together as he took his seat. His guest didn’t care much to find out *why* he was so uptight, he’d simply allow the man to get on with his life.

“Yes, sir. Sorry, sir.” She nodded, plating the rest of the meal before hurrying off to the kitchen once more. Awkwardness filled the room, thick enough to be cut. Will continued to eat his toast, polishing off two glasses of orange juice before tanning to excuse himself. “And where do you think you are going?” Hannibal barked, jaw tight.

Will chewed his lip, taking a deep breath before addressing the man. “I am excusing myself, Doctor Lecter. I have work to continue in the study and plans to fulfil with a few acquaintances of mine.” He replied simply, eyes never once meeting the older man’s. “Now, if you don’t mind. I would like to leave the table and return to my studies. Good day.” Will let out a small huff before padding out of the room, letting out a sigh of relief now that he was alone.

Hannibal’s jaw tightened again, left to imagine just *who* Will intended to spend his time with. He had not requested leave from the estate, yet Hannibal didn’t feel like fighting it in the moment. He could deal with it at a later date, when Will had particularly wound him to the

point of popping. After completing his meal, Hannibal returned to his chambers to prepare for a bath, deciding he would talk to Will after the fact.

Things seemed to disappear when Will indulged in his reading. It was almost as if he transported himself into the book, the real world around him faded to dust. For the fourth time over, Will flipped through the pages of his favourite book; *The Age of Innocence*, by *Edith Wharton*. Will had fallen in love with the book ever since he saw the front cover in a quaint bookstore back home. After reading it once, Will found himself unable to put it down for too long.

He kicked off his house slippers, perching on one of the leather chairs like a small bird cleaning itself. Brown ringlets fell in his pink face, glasses resting on the tip of his nose, too focused on the words to bother pushing them back up. For once, Will was still and calm. He wasn't trying to plan an escape or figure out ways to insult his part-time guardian.

Hannibal almost fainted at the sight of the boy being so... normal. Perhaps, his ways were rubbing off on the boy. He cleared his throat, standing by the door, arms crossed over his chest. A stance Will *knew* meant nothing good.

"Mr Graham." He spoke, adjusting his round glasses. "I'd like to discuss the plans you intend to *fulfil*."

"What about them, Doctor Lecter?" He hummed, not looking up from his book. *He was almost finished once again.*

"I am afraid you will be spending the rest of your day here. You shall continue with your studies until evening supper, then return to your chambers at eight." He informed, plucking the book from Will's hands, examining it. *The Age of Innocence*. How ironic. Although he could look it, Hannibal knew he was far from innocent.

Will grabbed at the book, mouth falling open at the man's words. How *dare* Hannibal try and ruin his plans, with his friends. He deserved to have some sort of a life. Hannibal couldn't

keep him prisoner. The still, quiet mood was more than ruined.

“What?” He yelled, getting to his feet with a huff. “...Wht?!”

Hannibal sighed, having expected such a reaction. “If I must repeat myself,” the man took a step into the room, looming over the boy. “You must remain here for the rest of the day. No shenanigans. You will stay in here and continue with your studies until evening supper, then you shall return to your chambers and go to sleep.”

“This...is baloney! You cannot dismiss my wishes simply because *you* have no life!” Will spat his venom, brows knitting together. “Nothin’ but a sore old man! Goodness! Have you never had a life?!”

“I don’t think my quality of life reflects your sour behaviour, young man.” God, even the sound of Hannibal’s voice drove Will up the wall. How could his parents have sent him away to live with such a wicked, unfair man? Angering Will in such a way hurt Hannibal, he wanted nothing more than to allow the boy to do as he pleased...so long he could join Will in his adventures. *No*. The man quickly reminded himself of the task at hand. “I suggest you put a stamp out that behaviour before I send you to your chambers indefinitely.”

Will couldn’t believe it. Not only had Hannibal taken away his freedom for that day, but he then threatened to take it away...*for good*. In the moment, Will refused to believe that any of this would benefit him. He couldn’t see that, perhaps, Hannibal was trying to protect him. “I suggest *you* stamp out your controlling attitudes! Before I call my parents and tell them you have been truly ungodly with their precious little boy!” Will threatened in return, finger pointed right in the man’s angry face. Before Hannibal could even process the meaning behind Will’s threat, the boy was stamping out of the room.

The sound of Will’s bedroom door slamming shut echoed through the whole house. Everything was silent, the sound of a pin dropping in the basement would be audible if anyone dared to do so. Will circled around his room, running a hand through his especially unruly curls in attempts to calm himself. Hannibal could try, but he wasn’t going to lock Will away in some doorless castle. He flopped onto his bed with a groan, closing the curtains.

Now, the boy had plenty of time to scheme.

Once a plan had been conjured up, Will crawled out from his bed and began rifling through his closet. His fingers glided over a short, black and gold dress with a feathered hem. *Perfect*. It would reach just above his knee, the trim skimming his soft legs. He set down the dress, deciding to start on his makeup. Before leaving, Will's fingers had become particularly sticky, plucking makeup from high-end stores whenever he got the chance. He'd collected eyeshadow, blush and shades of creamy lipstick, as well as a compact of mascara. *'A good mascara is harder to find than a good man.'* He could hear his mother humming in his mind.

She was the first person to show Will how to wear makeup correctly. The woman had found her son one afternoon, bright blue eyeshadow and coral lipstick staining his shocked face. She couldn't help but laugh, reassuring the boy things would be okay. She would help. Will quickly picked up the talent, leaving bright blue eyeshadow in the past. He hummed softly, gazing at himself in the mirror as he mastered the look of a dark smokey eye, paring it with a dark lip and gloss.

"You got this..." Will whispered to himself, pinning his hair into a messy bun before slipping on his dress, leaving his heels for later. He slipped them into his purse, knowing they would make far too much noise as he walked through the house. By now, Hannibal had to be asleep, locked away in his own room for the night. He crept through the house, checking over his shoulder before slipping out the large front door, running down the stairs towards where Beverly Katz was waiting for him.

"You polish up wonderfully!" Beverly beamed as Will slipped into her car. Well, her father's car. She had taken it without his permission, driving away when she knew the man was fast asleep.

"You flatter. You look dashing tonight." He complimented, leaning over to press a soft kiss to the girl's cheek. Will relaxed into his seat as they made their way to the event, slipping on his heels. "You won't believe the trials I went through to even get in this car, Bev. I tell you...Doctor Lecter is a freak."

She scoffed, shaking her head. "What did he do now? I swear, Will, you put up with far too much." The young woman teased, parking the car before jumping out. As soon as Will had

followed, Beverly hooked her arm with Will's to lead him inside.

Will looked over at her, groaning softly. "He banished me from seeing you and Matthew Brown. Banished me from coming out tonight... So I snuck out. It's like he fancies himself as my father." He scoffed, smiling at the patrons inside the Speakeasy as they headed inside. On stage, a group of beautifully dressed girls performed, filling the room with lively music. Will was already enjoying himself.

The pair made their way over to the bar, aiming to start the night off right. Will wanted to forget his fight with Hannibal and Beverly was more than happy to help. She leant over the bar, grabbing a bottle of sweet vodka when the bartender wasn't looking. "Here. Let's get canned." She chuckled, popping open the bottle, handing it over to the young man. Will sighed, scanning the room before taking the bottle. He looked a second time, making sure that none of Hannibal's so-called '*friends*' were in the same establishment. However, his worries were calmed when he remembered just how uptight they were.

"Relax." Beverly whispered, bringing the bottle neck to Will's dark lips. "Let loose."

"Yeah..." he chuckled, taking a long sip. The alcohol burnt his throat, pulling a soft groan from the boy. Will was better acquainted with sweet, fruity cocktails. He took another sip, sighing as the burning feeling slowly disappeared.

Soon, Will was much more *relaxed*.

He danced with Beverly, swaying and swinging with the girl giddily. The whole fight with Hannibal drifted away from his mind as the night continued. One bottle turned to two, almost polishing off a third bottle by the night's end. His cheeks were flushed a bright red, tinted with the obvious effects of alcohol. His movements were sloppy and loose as he moved through the Speakeasy with Beverly and some strange girl.

"Will!" Beverly spoke loudly, hand slanted on either side of Will's warm shoulders. The boy was a *mess*. "Will... I'm going for a nightcap at Alana's. Can you make it home on your own?"

“You are so pretty...” Will slurred, smiling up at the young woman. He looked around, eyelids heavy with intoxication. Beverly didn’t need a direct response, it was evident enough - Will could not make it home alone.

“Will...I’m...” she sighed, “I’m going to have to call Doctor Lecter, Will. You can’t get into a cab in this state.”

The boy’s eyes widened, sense knocking back into him with the force of a thousand men. *Hannibal*. “No! You can’t call him... he will hang...hang me o-out to dry!” He hiccuped, tears beginning to well in his eyes at the thought of being caught. He had been *so* close. So close to having a goodnight without Hannibal’s harsh gaze. Beverly didn’t listen to his protests, simply guiding the young man into a seat before disappearing to use the phone.

Will hugged himself, suddenly feeling cold in his scandalous dress. The night had been so good, yet Will had found a way to ruin it. Tears began to streak Will’s flushed face, mascara staining his cheeks within seconds. Hannibal was going to kill him, that much he knew.

The call had roused Hannibal from his slumber, much to his annoyance. The subject only made his blood boil. Within minutes, Hannibal had pulled on a robe and jumped into his car.

Will hadn’t learnt a thing.

He parked outside the speakeasy, climbing out of his car with a sour look on his face. “Mrs Katz, I appreciate your call.” Hannibal ground out, jaw tight as he talked. She simply nodded, hurrying to show the man where the reckless boy was seated.

Then and there, Hannibal’s anger melted away. Seeing Will, curled up in the chair with tears streaking his face, caused Hannibal to soften. His arms wrapped around the boy’s shoulder, guiding him out of the dimly lit room to his car. Will was hot, his skin covered in a sweet-smelling sheen. The poor boy had drunk himself past the point of competency, unable to walk without guidance.

“I can’t even begin to tell you just how disappointed I am in you, Mr Graham.” Hannibal almost growled once the car was in motion once again. “Not only did you completely disregard my instructions, but you managed to wiggle yourself into yet another uncomfortable position. Do you not feel truly disgusted with yourself, hm?” His harsh words turned to yells, flashing the young man angry gazes.

Will simply winced, shifting uncomfortably in the sticky leather seats. He cranked the window enjoying the feeling of cold air on his face. “Why can’t...can’t you just leave me alone for once?” He mumbled, wiping his cheeks with the back of his hands.

Hannibal laughed. It wasn’t a good laugh. “Because I fear if I leave you alone, you might find yourself in all sorts of uncomfortable positions! God knows what messes you were getting into to be sent to me?”

“Shut your filthy trap! My mother and father aren’t even paying you to care for me...so why don’t you just send me on my way?!” Hannibal fell silent at that, focusing on the road. He sighed, helping Will out of the car once they had arrived. It was almost as if Will had been replaced with a baby deer, his limbs weak and clumsy. He couldn’t walk, not like this.

In one swift movement, Will was in his arms, being carried up the stairs and into the silent home. There was no use in trying to punish Will. He wouldn’t remember Hannibal’s words come morning. Hell, there was never any use in punishing Will Graham. The boy was a whirlwind, unable to be stopped by any force that dared step in his way. His parents couldn’t stop him, Hannibal couldn’t stop him. No one, nothing, could. Hannibal carried the boy to his chambers, sitting him down on the bed. “I will request for Georgia to be sent your way. She will help you out of this...dress and aid you whilst you sleep.”

Will shook his head, grabbing Hannibal’s wrist, forcing him to stay still. “Don’t...I don’t wish for her to see me in such a state. Would you help me out of my dress... I’m feeling awfully sick.” He whined, turning so Hannibal could have access to his zipper. Hannibal’s throat ran dry as he leant forward to aid the boy out of his dress. His stomach still bubbled with anger as he helped Will into bed, stabbing at his sides so painfully he was sure he’d have to leave before he snapped once more.

“Are you feeling nauseous?” The older man hummed, tucking the boy into bed once more. Will nodded, eyes fluttering in attempt to focus on the man in front of him. “Excuse me for a moment. I shall get you a glass of water and a bowl.”

“O...Okay.” Whispered Will, sniffing. The night grew heavy on Will, weighing down his limbs, gluing Will to his mattress. He must have looked a sight, curls stuck to his face with sweat, damp and dark. Hannibal soon returned with a bowl, which Will emptied his stomach into within minutes, groaning in discomfort.

Hannibal soothed the boy, rubbing his back gently as he continued to vomit and whine. The poor boy. How could anyone be mad at such a wounded creature? *Hannibal certainly couldn't*. He guided the glass of tepid water to Will's lips, encouraging him to take just one sip. However, before Will could, he was fast asleep with his head against the pillow.

The sight brought a smile to Hannibal's lips; tight and small, but a smile no less. For a while, Hannibal simply sat and watched. He watched Will's soft lips part as he let out quiet snores. He watched as ringlets of chocolate brown fall into his face, moving along with him as he shifted under the sheets, getting comfortable. Hannibal listened to the soft whimpers he made when he moved, moans and sighs of slight discomfort. Hannibal watched until those noises stopped, until he knew Will was truly comfortable in his slumber. Only then, did he leave.

Will continued to vomit for the following two days, unable to keep anything other than toast in his stomach. He was truly embarrassed, left weak and vulnerable in a bed far away from the place he called home. Will would be lying if he said he didn't cry, face buried in the pillow as he waited for his nausea to pass.

Days and weeks continued to pass, moulding together as Will read books upon books in Hannibal's vast library. The two hardly talked, almost ignoring one another. It was easy to do in such a large house. Hannibal spent most of his days in his drawing room, in the yard or out of the house on alleged business. Will didn't seem to mind, not when things were so peaceful.

Avoiding one another became harder as Christmas drew closer, drowning Will in a sea of nerves and anticipation. It had been more than six months since Will had arrived to The

Lecter Estate, yet to hear from his parents. They promised to write him during the holiday period. They promised to send gifts, to send their love to their son. However, when Will awoke bright and messy on Christmas Day...he was met with no such thing.

The resentment that had been buried deep arose once more. His parents had sent them away and forgotten about him in the short period. Will was sure Hannibal had forgotten him too, only ever managing to talk to the boy when he deemed Will's behaviour rotten and unacceptable. There were no more good-morning's, no more good nights or polite inquiries into what book Will had plucked off the shelf. Hannibal didn't even bother to nod his head in acknowledgement when Will walked past him in the halls.

Hannibal failed to even speak to him at their festive Ball, one Will had insisted that they host. He'd made the effort to be kind, to be civil and polite with Hannibal so that their party could be in full swing... but the man didn't seem to care. He spent the evening conversing with the likes of Doctor Chilton and Gideon, swallowing down flutes of Champagne like his life depended on it. Will forced himself not to pay any mind to the ridiculous man, dismissing his behaviour in favour of spending time with Randall Tier. He was Will's guest of honour, so to speak.

Unstable communication carried out into the New Year, leaving Will as anything but happy. He couldn't imagine someone like Hannibal managing to be silent for quite so long, only ever barking out words when the boy drove him up the wall once again.

Things weren't right. Will didn't like it one bit.

Chapter End Notes

What do you think has got Hannibal handing out the silent treatment?

I hope you enjoyed this chapter!

Chapter Four.

Being ignored was one of the worst feelings. When he passed Hannibal in the halls, it was as though the man was doing everything in his power to *not* look at Will. During their tutoring sessions in the library, Hannibal would have his head buried in a book without fail, never looking up until the hour had passed. If Will did get the privilege of being spoken to, it was never more than a low mutter or a furious shout.

Hannibal only ever cared when Will *made* him care. When Will was poorly behaved, the man never failed to shout and scream at the top of his lungs. Although it wasn't ideal, at least Will was being spoken to. He'd keep his eyes on the ground as Hannibal yelled, mentally reasoning that his wrong doings were... *good*. Soon, he was able to drown out the yelling and focus on Hannibal simply speaking.

To begin with, Will kept things small. *To win a war, one shall never begin with the bombs.*

It began with wearing his shoes in the library. This was something Hannibal had warned him not to do in the beginning; no shoes, unless they were house slippers. Will made sure to disregard that entirely, going on long walks around the field until his shoes were caked with mud and morning dew. Part of him felt bad for dirtying the carpet, leaving streaks of wet mud as he walked to his seat. Hannibal told him off, but not fully. He mumbled an unhappy phrase at the boy before simply taking his seat and producing yet another book.

Will was... defeated. But, that wouldn't stop him. It wasn't right that Hannibal gave him the silent treatment. He deserved many things, but being ignored was not one of them. Everyone deserved to be talked to.

For a week, he continued with his morning routine; getting up, sharing breakfast with Georgia before going on a long walk. Some days, Will even found himself jumping in small puddles for a greater effect. Still, much like the first incident, Hannibal didn't care much. *He didn't care at all*. Will knew he'd have to up his efforts soon.

Dirty shoes turned to cups of hot coffee - another rule Hannibal had put in place. No hot drinks were to be had in the library, in case of a spillage. Will prepared himself a cup, almost overflowing with how much steaming liquid he had filled it with. As he placed it on the desk,

atop Hannibal's files, it sloshed and spilt, quickly staining the paper a milky brown. That wasn't all Will had in store. Before Hannibal could arrive, Will equipped himself with a pen full of ink, allowing droplets to fall against the already-stained paper.

"What do you think you are doing?" The man yelled upon seeing his ruined sketches and files. Will could see just how tightly his jaw tightened, nostrils flaring as he let out a spew of angry insults at the boy. Although it wasn't a rampage, Will was happy to be talked to nonetheless. Hannibal frowned and groaned, pacing the library as he yelled for Will to clean up his inconsiderate mess. What Hannibal didn't notice was that...Will was already cleaning it up, without being asked. He used his own handkerchief to blot the ink and cold coffee, clearing it as best as he could without ruining the entirety of the paper.

"My apologies..." he mumbled, which only made Hannibal yell once more. It was the most the man had talked to him in months, Will almost whimpered when it came to an end. Five minutes. That's all that he got. All that he deserved. It saddened Will. Despite having friends both on the estate and outside it, Will still managed to feel alone. Hannibal managed to make him feel alone, small and unworthy...with even speaking to him.

By the next week, Will didn't come to his tutor sessions. Hannibal frowned when he wasn't met with unkempt curls and the smell of grass or rain. The library felt cold without the boy in its walls. It felt *unwelcoming*. He sat, taking his foot against the carpeted floor as he waited for Will with the simple assumption that the boy was late. When the clock turned to nine and a quarter, Hannibal would wait no longer.

He got to his feet, hands in his pockets as he swiftly made his way to the boys chambers. Swallowing, Hannibal knocked with a heavy hand, stepping back when the door creaked open.

"Mr Graham isn't feeling all too well," Georgia greeted him with a polite smile, holding a wet rag in her hand. "I'm afraid he may have eaten something rotten. He asks that you excuse him from tutoring presently, and for tomorrow's sessions." Hannibal blinked, looking blankly at the girl for a few moments as he absorbed her words. Had he eaten something bad too? Could that explain the feeling at the pit of his stomach, buried, waiting to explode?

"I understand." Hannibal hummed, pursing his lips. "Give him my best wishes. I will have someone send supper to him this evening so he needn't leave his bed." The man spoke to Georgia. Only to Georgia. Never once did he look past her shoulder to wish Will a speedy

recovery - not that he needed it anyway. He simply didn't wish to attend his sessions and reasoned that sickness would be a good enough excuse for Hannibal to talk to him. Once again, his efforts were beyond fruitless. Will sighed softly, falling against his pillows once the door had closed.

"He hates me, Georgia...no, despises me." Will mumbled, peeking his head through the dark curtains surrounding his bed. The woman sighed, sitting down next to him. She wouldn't admit it, but Georgia had never once seen her employer act in such a way.

"He's a difficult man...Doctor Lecter is prone to sour moods like such." She lied, brushing curls from the boy's face. "You needn't worry, Will. Soon, he will be back to his usual self and you will be friendly once again."

Her words brought him no comfort. "Now," Georgia sighed, forcing herself to smile. "Tell me about that mysterious boy you danced with at the Ball... you have left me wondering for moons."

Will chuckled, shaking his head as blush tinted his cheeks. "Randall Tier, I think you mean? He's...interested in me."

"And are you interested in him equally?"

"Equally?" He laughed softly, lacing his fingers with Georgias. He and Randall had been on friendly outings once or twice since the ball, but Will was yet to feel a spark the way Randall clearly had. "No. I don't know... it's confusing to me. We have been out on several occasions...and I'm yet to feel anything other than friendly attraction. He's a handsome young man, but I don't think he can see past the end of his own nose."

Georgia couldn't help but laugh with him, endlessly mused by the boy's dramatic way of recounting things. She had never met Randal personally, but even just looking at him, she knew something wasn't right. The boy seemed slimy and underdeveloped, as if he still fancied himself an infant. He wasn't right for Will, not when Will had so much more to offer to the world. "Perhaps he is nothing more than a friend, Will. You mustn't be afraid to put an end to things before they get out of control."

“I suppose.”

After recovering from his forged illness, Will continued to evade his tutoring sessions. He would hide in his bedroom until Hannibal came calling, forcing him down to the library whether he liked it or not. He would yell and lecture Will on the importance of education and time keeping. Will would simply sit and listen, bright eyes glued to Hannibal as he rambled angrily. Almost as if he were in awe of the man.

“I’m afraid I have to act on this,” Hannibal huffed, finally sitting in his own chair, brows knitted together as always. “You are no longer permitted to leave the estate without asking me for permission first. You must ask me at least one day in advance.”

Will chewed his lip, nodding slowly. “I understand, Doctor Lecter.” He hummed, picking up *The Age of Innocence* once more. By now, the book was missing its back cover, the front worn and peeling. Its spine was creased beyond saving, a sign of a well loved and enjoyed book. Hannibal seemed surprised every time Will picked it back up, wondering why he liked it so much.

“You have nothing else to say on the matter?” Asked the man, surprised.

“No, Doctor. I understand that you have set rules that are not to be broken. I will restrain myself and keep from breaking those rules.” He continued to hum, voice soft as he spoke. Will raised his brow, confused as to why Hannibal looked so puzzled. Is that not what he wanted? After a moment of silent thought, Hannibal simply nodded and got up from his chair, leaving the room.

Will sighed deeply. It still wasn’t enough.

Ruining files and staining carpets was no longer good enough. After being caught for simply staying in bed, Hannibal returned to ignoring the boy almost completely. Will knew he had to do better than that to have Hannibal back for good.

Whilst Hannibal was away for work, Will devised a plan. He made secret phone calls to Randall, listening politely as the young man invited him out for their first romantic outing. They were scheduled to see a film and go out for milkshakes afterwards in the town. It was simple, but Will knew leaving without permission would be more than effective.

Smoothing out his peach day dress, Will let out a shaky sigh. He'd made himself look pretty, but not too pretty. He looked natural, cheeks tinted a soft pink to match his glossy lips, hair pinned back and out of his face. For reasons unknown, Will felt nervous and unsure. He'd been on plenty of romantic outings back home, meeting with possible husbands and wives to appease his parents. Yet, this felt different in a whole new way.

Will was pulled from his thoughts when a car horn sounded from outside. *Randall*. For a second, his stomach knotted and clenched, but Will pushed that away as quickly as he could. Their afternoon would be good together, Will would make sure of that. He slipped on his small heels before running down the stairs and out of the front door, leaving Georgia to keep his cover just like he'd asked.

“Your beauty has no words today, Will.” Randall cooed, smiling over at Will as they walked through the calm streets. The words made Will blush, but not the young man himself. As always, Randall looked put together, dressed in simple pants and a dress shirt.

“You flatter,” he laughed, curls falling into his face as he shook his head. “You comment on my beauty every time we see one another. However, you waited so long to act on those thoughts.” Will expected Randall to say something creative, something poetic and sweet in order to woo Will. However, he only chuckled in response and continued to walk.

The pair took their seats in the cinema, sat next to one another with soft smiles on their faces. Will had insisted on seeing *Beyond The Rocks*, hoping that the romantic film would help ignite his feelings for the boy beside him. He sighed softly, looking down at his lap when he

felt the warmth of a hand on his thigh. It crept up his thigh, squeezing the soft skin there, pulling a shiver from Will.

They left before the film had a chance to finish.

Hannibal pulled off his coat as soon as he arrived through the door, hanging it up along with his hat. The house seemed quiet, yet Hannibal found himself reasoning that Will must simply be reading or enjoying an afternoon nap. He took himself to the kitchen, preparing two mugs of warm tea. One for himself, and one for Will.

“Mr Graham?” Hannibal called as he walked through the halls, carrying a tray in his hands. No response came, which worried Hannibal. “Mr Graham?” He called once more, now approaching the boy’s chambers, watching as Georgia scurried out of the room.

“Doctor Lecter,” she called, her voice slightly hushed as she spoke. “I’m afraid Mr Graham is not feeling too well once again. He complained of a fever and is currently resting.” Hannibal sighed softly, letting out an almost silent ‘tsk’. He took a step forward, pushing open the bedroom door with his foot, stepping inside. The beds curtains were closed, shielding Hannibal from Will.

“Allow me to check up on him. I’d hate for him to be truly unwell,” Hannibal mumbled, setting the tray of warm tea on the dresser before turning to the bed. Georgia froze, mind racing as she attempted to string together a lie.

“I wouldn’t wake him!” She whispered, shaking her head. “He’s rotten when you do that.”

Hannibal raised an eyebrow, looking down at the mousy-haired girl with suspicious eyes. Without replying, Hannibal pulled back the curtains, finding the bed to be completely empty. *Where was Will?* “It appears Mr Graham isn’t here. I demand to know where he has gone.” His voice was as even as ever, but Georgia could hear just how annoyed he was.

“I don’t... I don’t know. Perhaps he went on a walk,” she swallowed. “A walk in the yard...or out with the horses.”

“With a fever? I think not.” Hannibal paced, brow creased tightly. He left the room checking each room as he paced through the halls, calling Will’s name angrily. Once the man had torn the whole house apart, worry began to set in. He couldn’t find Will inside, or anywhere else on the estate or surrounding area. His stomach knotted, throat hot with acid as he paced the entrance hall.

“I demand to know where he is!” He yelled, shooting a truly chilling gaze at the young house maid. She trembled, nodding slowly. Although she promised to keep up the charade for Will, she couldn’t take seeing Hannibal so worried and angry. The poor man was restless, his hands twitching, brows knit tightly together as he wracked his brain.

Georgia swallowed. *Will would just have to be angry.* “I apologise I did not inform you sooner... But Will has left for the day.” Hannibal stopped in his tracks, instantly moving to pull on his coat. “He attended the movies with Randall Tier and is currently in the town. I think he mentioned milkshakes, Doctor Lecter.”

With a nod, Hannibal collected his keys and slid on his day shoes. “I appreciate you for confessing to me. I must be on my way now.” Georgia nodded, bowing her head before Hannibal could jog out the front door. Although the drive was relatively quick and Hannibal had done it a thousand times before, it felt like hours. So slow that it felt as though he wasn’t moving at all, cursed to stay entirely still. His fingers drummed against the wheel, lip caught firmly between his teeth as he drove, chewing anxiously.

Hannibal couldn’t help but imagine all the awful things Randal Tier could be doing to that beautiful boy. Buying him things, spending time with Will. Courting him. Soon, Will would be off getting married if he didn’t simply hurry along. He was furious, to say the least. It hurt to know Will would disobey him after so readily agreeing to Hannibal’s simple rules. It hurt that Will could stare him in the face and lie that way.

Legally parking wasn’t on the man’s mind as he approached the only milkshake store in town, too focused on the objective at hand. He slammed on the breaks, jumping out of the

car, leaving his vehicle running. The bell on the door chimed and Hannibal's blood only boiled further. Sat, hidden away in a small booth, were the couple. Will looked tired, his previously neat curls tousled ever so slightly, lipstick smeared and mostly gone. Randal appeared to be in a similar state, a sheen of peach lipstick staining his own thin lips.

Bright pools met Hannibal's dark eyes, frozen in fear like deer in a headlight. Will sunk into his side of the booth, sighing deeply as he mumbled a few soft curses.

"Whatever is the matter, doll?" Randall cooed, unaware of the seething man standing behind him.

"Hm, that is a good question, Mr Teir." Hannibal nearly growled, watching as the boy near enough jumped out of his skin. "Whatever is the matter? Afraid that you have been caught up in your little lie, young man?"

Will went red, collecting his purse and sunglasses before standing to his feet. He looked over at Hannibal, now ignoring the confused boy that sat before them. "Doctor Lecter... please do not make a scene. I won't put up any protest in returning home with you." He let out a little whine as Hannibal grabbed his arm, pulling him out of the store and into the still-running car. After weeks of trying to figure out exactly what a *spark* meant, Will finally found out when Hannibal grabbed his

Hannibal was silent for a while, breathing heavily as his eyes flitted between Will and the road. His whole car now smelt like sweet sweat, expensive perfumes and rich ice cream. It smelt like Will. How could he be mad when the boy smelt so sweet and looked so divine? He couldn't, but he had to. Will had to learn, one way or another. "I am utterly disgusted with you Will!"

The boy's heart fluttered. It was the first time Hannibal had ever used his actual name and not his title. "How dare you break my rules once again! Not only do you do that, but you also put your house maid in an uncomfortable position! You are utterly reckless, with absolutely no care for those around you.." he shook his head, drumming his fingers on the wheel once more, waiting for traffic to clear.

"You disregard my every word. Your behaviour has been unimaginably disgusting these few months. Are you even listening to me?" He continued to yell, cheeks turning pink from the

exertion. “Do my words go in one ear and right out the other? Is your brain full of worms and dirt?!” He looked over again, scoffing when he noticed the soft smile on Will’s lips and the glassy look in his eyes. “Is this amusing to you, Will? Is my anger hilarious?!”

Will shook his head gently, looking over at the man as the car came to a stop. “No. This is simply the first time you have talked to me in months...for more than five minutes.” Hannibal’s heart stopped, his expression softening. Suddenly, it came crashing down on him. All Will had wanted is to be paid attention to, to be talked to and acknowledged by the older man.

Looking back, his behaviour had been just as bad as Will’s. He had ignored the boy with no good reason other than jealousy. He had pushed Will to go to extremes. “Oh... Will.”

“No.” The boy shook his head and climbed out of the car. “I understand your anger. I feel as though it’s deserved on this occasion. Disobeying you in such a way wasn’t needed.” He hummed, heading inside with Hannibal. Will slipped off his cardigan and kicked off his small heels, leaving them by the door for later collection. Hannibal followed, pulling off his own coat and shoes, sliding his glasses into his pocket.

“Although you are clearly remorseful, I hope you understand you will still be punished for your wrong doings.” Will nodded, hanging his head. Hannibal gently grabbed his arm, sending another spark through the boy as he led him up the stairs. “You shall receive fifteen spansks.”

“Spanks?” Will raised his brows, watching with large eyes. “Am I a child?” Hannibal took a seat in his drawing room, patting his knee for Will to drape himself over. The boy sighed, simply obeying the man’s request. Will whined softly, cheeks turning a bright red as embarrassment consumed him - it had been a long time since anyone had spanked him. Slowly, Hannibal lifted up the soft fabric of Will’s day dress, hand tracing of his small underwear, fingers hooking over the elastic.

Will let out a soft whine when he felt cool air on the pale skin of his ass, making him squirm slightly. The older man took his time gently rubbing the flesh, warming it up so that the spansks wouldn’t hurt too much. Without warning, Hannibal delivered the first hit. It was light, simply something to prepare Will for the stronger ones that would follow. Will covered his mouth with his hand and bit down, attempting to hold back any noises that dared spill

from his mouth. He couldn't...enjoy this. It was a punishment. It was a punishment from Hannibal no less.

Another relatively light smack landed on Will's right ass cheek, flesh jiggling with the light force of the spank. Unfortunately, the hand over his mouth didn't do much to disguise the mewl that fell from his pink lips. Another spank. And another. And another, quickly turning Will's ass a beautiful shade of pink. Hannibal raised a brow in shock, pausing his movements for a moment to assess the situation.

Was...Will enjoying himself?

"I'd like you to tell me what you did on your little adventure today?" Hannibal ground out, delivering another vibrating spank to the centre of Will's ass.

"W-We went to the movies..." the boy mewled once again, toes curling in his white socks. "Saw...Saw a romance. Then we uh...went to his...went to get milkshakes." Will continued, missing out on a few details. It was far too embarrassing to even think about telling the man what had happened in the back of Randall's car. He didn't want to say it.

Hannibal tutted, shaking his head mock disappointment. "One of the perks of being a... *sore head doctor* is that I can tell when people are lying. What have you left out, young man?" Asked Hannibal, punctuating his words with a few more spanks. 5 to go. Will cried out at the next spank, feeling himself grow wet as his skin redder and become more sensitive. No...no... *no*. Will could not be aroused, not now. Not in Hannibal's lap.

"I told you..." Another slap, this time hitting him a little lower, sending a shot of pleasure up his spine.

"I'm not in the habit of repeating myself, boy." Hannibal growled, gripping at the warm flesh, watching in wonderment as Will squirmed and whined.

Will moaned softly, shaking his head in a pathetic attempt to protest. "W-We had intercourse! In the back of his car behind the park!" Will finally confessed with a hitch of his breath, attempting to hide his face in the chair. Hannibal frowned, releasing the warm flesh from his

grip. *Poor Will*. It was clear the boy didn't enjoy his time and wasn't proud of the intimate moment shared between him and Randall. Hannibal let out a small sigh, pulling up the boy's underwear without continuing further.

"Young men... boys, like Mr Teir do not deserve to be with beauties like yourself, Will. They lack the knowledge to properly care for their lovers and make careless decisions that gain them no popularity between the sexes." Hannibal brushed curls from Will's face with gentle fingers. "I wish for you to no longer waste your time with a senseless mind like his, understood? He failed to make you feel good, taking what he wanted from you rather selfishly. Do not call. Do not apologise for your leaving... it will make the disconnect much simpler." The man continued, cooing softly at the boy in his lap. Poor thing. He doubted anyone had ever shown Will the right affection.

"O-Okay..." he nodded with a soft snuffle. Truthfully, Will didn't want anything to do with Randall regardless. He hadn't wanted much to do with the boy since the Ball at Doctor Chilton's, but he needed the company. "I will."

Hannibal let out a pleased hum, patting Wil's back so he would stand up. "Have yourself a warm bath. I had soap imported from France, feel free to use it and relax. Supper will be straight after." He smiled gently, nodding at the boy before they parted once again. Hannibal wished he could've held Will longer, cradled him in his arms and kiss away the memory of Randall, kiss away the unpleasant sex. He wanted to draw a bath for Will and wash his gorgeous body with the softest cloth in his inventory. He wanted to kiss the boy's shoulders, nose at his wet nape and as he massaged shampoo into those dark curls.

He sighed, heading to his bedroom to deal with the painful erection in his pants.

Will drew a bath, ensuring the water was warm and full of bubbles. The liquid soap Hannibal had imported from France smelt like sweet cherry cakes, filling the bathroom with the most incredible scents. Things always seemed to smell better after a hard day. He relaxed into the water, resting his head against the porcelain tub with a content sigh.

The dull ache on his ass was soothed by the warm water and sweet smelling soap, almost completely disappearing after a few minutes of soaking. Will closed his eyes, thinking back

to Hannibal's almost concerned words. He knew the older man was right, the event had been all about Randall, not about Will. Their intimacy had been quick and incredibly short lived - much to Will's visible disappointment. He had hardly gotten close to reaching orgasm in the ten minutes it had taken Randal to come all over the back of his thigh *and* clean him up. Will had hardly gotten close to thinking about orgasming, facing his moans and cries as the other boy thrustured sloppily. Will cringed at the thought, chuckling to himself as he dwelled on the memory.

He thought about the event again. However, this time, he imagined Hannibal taking the young man's place. He imagined Hannibal thrusting into him slowly, deep and controlled as he tried to bring Will to orgasm before thinking about his own pleasure. Hannibal was a real man. He knew how to care for his lovers properly. Will's eyes shot open, shaking his head with a little scoff.

"You truly are rotten, Graham..." he mumbled to himself, grabbing his washcloth with another sigh. What was he going to do about his feelings?

Will cleaned himself off and got out of the bath, pulling on a clean nightgown before drying off his hair. He didn't feel much like getting properly dressed once again. Will took himself downstairs for supper like Hannibal had requested, smiling softly at the already seated man.

"You look much fresher." Hannibal hummed, handing Will a steaming cup of tea. Now, they could properly share a mug together. "I must say, that soap smells wonderful." He smiled when Will's cheeks turned a soft pink at the casual compliment. It felt...good.

"Thank you, Hannibal." He replied softly, sipping his tea. He felt relaxed, as if he could fall asleep in seconds given the chance. Hannibal nodded, falling quiet as dinner was served to them. The pair ate in comfortable silence, not needing to fill the space with needless and uncomfortable chatter. For once, Will found himself enjoying his time with the man. It felt good to be spoken to once again.

Hannibal cleared his throat once the plates had been cleared and they had retired to the sun room. "I apologise for ignoring you, Will." He started, sitting down with a glass of wine. "It was not my intention to make you feel isolated and hurt, I can assure you. I suppose..." he chewed his lips, pausing as he thought his confession over once more. "I suppose I may have been jealous about the affections you were sharing with Mr Teir. Truthfully, I feel attracted to you romantically and it hurt to see you with someone that didn't care fully."

Will had curled up on the chase lounge, resting his mess of curls on a soft pillow as he watched the sun setting through the glass roof. “Jealous?” He raised a brow, tilting his head to look at the man through his half-lidded eyes. “Randall is hardly anyone to be jealous of... especially when you are a man like yourself, Hannibal.” The way Will drawled his name drove Hannibal crazy. It sounded so soft and sweet as it fell from Will’s lips, washing over Hannibal like a refreshing wave.

“Yes. I found myself feeling quite hurt.”

“You are a fool...” Will mumbled, extending his arm, brushing his fingertips against the other’s hand. “Nothing but a fool, Hannibal...” he chuckled tiredly, eyes fluttering closed. Hannibal chuckled along with him, lazily lacing their fingers together. Within minutes, soft snores filled the sun room and Will’s hand slipped away from the older man’s.

Once again, Hannibal watched as Will dozed in the setting sun. He couldn’t deny himself, the boy simply looked like a painting lay out on the chase lounge. After a while, when the sun had fully set and Hannibal had filled his sketchbook, he scooped Will into his arms. Slowly, as not to wake the sleeping beauty, Hannibal took him up the elevator to his chambers, tucking him into bed. He pressed a kiss to Will’s forehead, whispering goodnight to the young man.

Chapter Five.

Chapter Notes

♡ Minor character death ahead! ♡

I'm sorry this one took so long to come out! I hope yall enjoy it.

Things began to change after Hannibal's admission of romance. There was no more silence in the halls when they passed one another, instead, flirtatious glances and soft *hello's* filled the small space. It felt good, for Will, to finally feel like he was back in Hannibal's life once again - for a good reason this time.

It wasn't long before Randall was forgotten. He was a memory Will felt happy enough to tuck away, happy enough to forget without feeling a spec of guilt at the mention of the boy's name. However, he felt wrong for having sex with him, as if he had betrayed his own feelings simply to get a rise from Hannibal. Although Will was still unsure, he felt as though he could return Hannibal's romantic feelings properly. Will had never been romantic with men before, or women, always finding himself in hot and compromising positions instead of in love.

He'd always dreamt of being in love. He'd dreamt of being held and cherished as heavy rain beat down on the windows and the cold clung heavily to the night air. Will always imagined the ways his lover would look at him, as though he had hung the moon and the stars and thought up a name for all of them. He thought of cooking for his love, spending every waking hour with them. Growing up, he'd envied his parents. They loved freely and wholly, looking at one another in the way Will yearned for. He wanted that. He needed that. He needed love that would always find him, no matter what corner of the world or his mind he was in.

Will felt ridiculous for not noticing it until it was presented to him. How had he not noticed the way Hannibal's eyes had widened and his breath caught in his throat at their first Ball? The way those dark eyes hovered over his body without a shred of lust in them, only wonderment. He had felt Hannibal looking at him as he danced with Randall, but never thought it might be out of jealousy or affection. Nowadays, Hannibal only looked at him with budding romance.

It had been almost a year since Will had moved from The Graham Manor, travelling to the North to start a new life. Christmas had been and the new year had reached its halfway mark. Will looked forward to the Christmas ahead of them.

During the course of the year, Will hadn't heard from his parents once. He waited patiently, waiting for the mail to be sorted, fingers crossed in hopes of a letter from his parents. It never came. Will wondered if they had truly abandoned him, if they had any intention of ever coming back for him.

"Hannibal?" Will hummed from his position on the chase lounge. He bathed in the sunlight, drinking it up.

"Hm?" Hannibal looked up from his sketchbook, pretending to sketch the trees and birds in his yard. His sketchbooks had become filled with Will and his beautiful face.

He sighed, turning onto his side, curls falling into his face. Will adjusted his dress, necklace falling to the side with the weight of its pendant. "Do my parents ever write you? I'd like to think they'd at least keep in contact with you...if not me." Will mumbled, lips downturning for a second.

"I'm afraid not." He closed the leather book, setting it down. "I've written to them on a few occasions. Christmas. Your birthday. I'm yet to hear anything back." Hannibal informed him, not allowing his mind to wander to anything negative. The boy and his family were as safe as can be.

Will shrugged, reaching out to touch Hannibal's leg. They hadn't kissed yet, not ready to do anything other than hold one another's hands just yet. Will wanted to kiss him. "Strange. What are you drawing?"

"The trees."

"May I see?"

Hannibal flushed slightly and shook his head, pursing his lips as he got to his feet. "Some things may be kept private, my dear Will." He chuckled lowly. "I have some work to do. Will you be okay alone?"

"I suppose." He flopped back against the comfortable lounger, looking up at the sky through the glass roof. Hannibal bent down and pressed a soft kiss to the boy's forehead, hesitating as he thought about kissing his lips, before leaving the room.

Will remained on the lounger for a while, humming to himself. Eventually, he got bored and picked himself up to head to the library. His reading collection had grown sizable in the last month or two, Hannibal had imported some books from France and Italy for his birthday. Bright colours with wonderful front covers, in languages Will knew quite well. He slumped down onto the leather chair with a new book, flicking through the pages absentmindedly.

He couldn't stop himself from thinking about the sketch pad. Hannibal wasn't drawing trees, they never took countless hours to draw. Will got up from his seat, padding over to the small desk in the corner of the room, opening up a drawer as slowly as he could. Not making any noise. Picking up a sketchbook, Will thumbed through the pages, eyes softening as he traced the paper.

Images of him. All of him. There he was, splay out on the lounger with his curls in his face, shadows falling against his skin from the sun, peaceful and happy. Again, there he was, this time in the dress from their first Ball. Hannibal had coloured it in, adding beautiful hues of red and browns, framing the sketched face with chocolate curls. He was smiling. His skin was milky and smooth, body curved and sweet. Hannibal had captured him in ways Will had never seen before - and it was *his* body. Hannibal had caught him so beautifully off-guard, twirling hair around his finger, eating cherries in the yard until his fingers turned red. Hannibal had caught it all.

The one of him sleeping was one of his favourites. Will had never seen himself sleeping before. He'd never seen how his mouth hung open ever so, how long and curled his lashes looked or how his nose seemed to scrunch. Will never knew he was beautiful until those drawings. He sighed, smiling brightly as tears pricked his eyes. "Fool..." he whispered. Will tore the page out, careful not to damage anything as he did so, folding the sheet into a small square. Once he'd put the book back, Will carefully walked to his bedroom.

He smiled to himself, looking at the sketch as he lay in bed. His stomach hurt wonderfully, as if butterflies were fighting to find their way out of him. No one had ever drawn him before. No one had ever called him beautiful without a lustful look in their eyes, apart from his mother. Will felt warm, just like he had in the sun room. *Hannibal loved him, and he loved Hannibal.* After a while of simply staring at the picture and thinking of his parents, Will's eyes began to grow heavy. He hadn't done much that day, but still felt exhausted.

Will managed to pull on his nightgown before sleep took a hold of him. He lay on his back, drawing pressed to his chest as he allowed himself to slip into a heavy slumber.

Hannibal felt awful for having to work so long, locked away in his study, sifting through files and patient applications. He wanted nothing more than to join Will in the sitting room or for a walk in the yard. He sighed in relief once every paper had been read and signed, finally freeing himself.

Before attending to his own needs, Hannibal searched for Will. He was half disappointed when the boy wasn't in his bed, yearning to have Will in it. Slowly, keeping in mind just how late it was, Hannibal pushed open Will's door. The curtains around his bed were still open, yet to be drawn by the clearly sleeping boy. He crept closer, breath catching in his throat as he looked at the peaceful sleeper. There, clung to his chest, was the drawing Hannibal had done not too long ago.

It was his favourite one, too.

He took a seat at the edge of the bed, stilling when Will stirred and whined softly in his sleep. "Quiet, my dear." Hannibal whispered, brushing away stray curls. "Go back to sleep, my beautiful boy...rest well." Will whined in his sleep again, eyes fluttering as his unconscious mind registered Hannibal's quiet voice, reaching him even as he slept. Will looked beautiful, that he couldn't deny. With his hand resting on the pillow, head tilted to the side as small snores escaped his parted lips. The ones Hannibal couldn't wait to kiss.

"Han..." Will whispered softly, eyes still closed, breathing still even. Still fast asleep.

Hannibal smiled and kissed his forehead once more before leaving. He wished he had stayed, kicked off his shoes and curled up in bed with the boy until the sun shone through his

windows. Hannibal slept alone that night, leaving the other side empty for his lover in case he ever joined.

"You stole my drawing." Hannibal finally brought it up a few days later, smiling at the way Will blushed and preened. He'd been caught.

"You watched me sleep." He had been caught as well. Caught in a sticky, inescapable trap of love. Hannibal laughed softly, shaking his head as he pulled Will closer into his lap, sat in the library once again.

They both enjoyed their evening cuddles, holding one another for a few hours before tiredness eventually took over Will. Hannibal would carry him to his bed, tuck him in and kiss his forehead with a fond lightness.

That night was the same. Will fell asleep in Hannibal's arms after drinking a cup of hot cocoa with the man. They had talked until Will began to get drowsy, eyes heavy, trying to stay awake just for Hannibal.

"Oh, darling..." Hannibal whispered fondly, scooping the boy fully into his arms, carrying him away to his Chambers. He removed Will from his shoes, trousers and shirt, leaving him in his undergarments before tucking him into the soft sheets. "Goodnight." He cooed, kissing his head.

The night was still and silent, until a cautious knock sounded from the maids entrance. Georgia woke first, opening the door with a tired smile as she wrapped a robe around herself. Who could be knocking in the dead of night?

"An emergency letter for Mr Graham." The man announced, handing over a small letter marked with the words *urgent*. Gingerly, Georgia took it from him. Suddenly, an awful feeling consumed her. Something told her Will couldn't be the first to see it. Something told her nothing in this letter could be good.

"Thank you, sir." She closed the door. Georgia opened up the letter, checking her surroundings to make sure none of the maids were lurking. Her hand came to her mouth, tears falling down her cheeks as she hurried off to Will's bedroom, almost racing through the halls.

"Will?"

"Hm..." he grumbled, displeased. He sat up, rubbing at his eyes when Georgia called his name once more. *She was crying*. "What's wrong, Georgia? Are you okay?"

She shook her head, taking a seat on the bed next to him. "This...This came for you. I'm so sorry, Will." Georgia handed over the letter, swallowing thickly, heart thumping and pounding in her flushed chest.

Will took it, looking at her with a confused look. *No. No. No*. Will couldn't believe it. He read it again, and again, and again. Reading the words as if they would change if he looked hard enough. As if they would disappear and be false. He rubbed at the paper, trying to rub the words away.

' Cancer of the lungs.' 'Suicide - a broken heart.' 'Your name is in our prayers.'

It wasn't true. It couldn't *be* true. Will cried out in anguish, gripping the paper until his knuckles went white. He continued to wail, calling for his mother and father as he sobbed, uncaring if he woke anyone up. Georgia attempted to console him, rubbing his back gently. But, Will wasn't having it.

Will got to his feet shakily, running to the basin in his room to vomit. He vomited twice, crying for his mother to come back to him. How hadn't he seen her sickness? Her meek smile and soft voice. How hadn't he noticed it?

He sniffled, wiping at his mouth as he stumbled out of his room. Much like Georgia had, he ran down the halls, bursting into Hannibal's bedroom with another frantic sob. If the wailing hadn't woken the man, that certainly had.

"They are dead!" He wailed, bashing his balled up fists against the man's bare chest. "Dead, Hannibal!" Will looked wild, face streaked with tears, nose red and face blotchy. His breath smelt like vomit and mint, spit thick. "She had...She had cancer! Papa killed himself!" All Hannibal could do was hold the boy as he spoke and as he wailed, hashing him, petting his hair.

"Oh, Will...." Hannibal cooed, kissing his forehead. He hadn't realised it, but Hannibal was crying too, his breathing uneven as his heart broke for the boy. He now understood why radio silence was the only thing they had received. Will trembled, gripping onto Hannibal like he was the only thing keeping him grounded.

Will was heart broken.

He remembered his mother and what she was like when he left. She had held him extra tightly, burying her nose into the crown of Will's soft curls, whispering how much she would miss her darling son. She smelt like candied apples and marigolds, as well as imported cigarettes. She smelt like safety, childhood and...home. she smelt like a mother. A woman who had not been lost in a sea of sickness just yet.

He remembered her on summer afternoons, when the air was thick and sticky. She'd make sweet tea for her husband and Will, her hair tied into a ponytail. He remembered her long, thick curls and how they would fall into her face in such a wild way, just like his. She never pinned her hair up for Balls or events, allowing people to see her in the only form she had. She never put on a show for anyone but herself. He'd resented her for sending him away, too angry to cry in her arms like a little boy. To apologise and beg to stay.

Will hit Hannibal's chest again, screaming into the safety of his chest. Screaming for something. Someone. He thought of his father. How crushed he must have been. How hideous it must have been to watch his soulmate wither into something else. Something new. Something awful. He thought about all the nights he must have spent alone, holding her clammy hand in the hospital room. How he must have felt when she finally passed.

Franklin Graham: died of a broken heart. He'd joined his wife not a week after her passing. He couldn't be without her. Life didn't seem worth it without his bundle of joy by his side. Oh, how he had loved her. How he had sung her praise until his voice ran hoarse. How he had kissed her, held her, made love to her on lazy afternoons with words of adoration of his busy lips. How much he had loved waking to her every morning, kissing her freckled body, laughing when she woke and playfully pushed him away.

They had always been so happy. They had never hurt a fly. God was cruel and unjust in his punishments. Mary and Franklin didn't deserve it, Hannibal knew that much.

"They can't be gone! Don't let them be gone, Hannibal!" He sobbed, cries becoming hoarse and weak now. Will shook his head, trembling.

"I'm sorry, Will. I'm so sorry." He whispered, hushing his sweet lover. Will hadn't even had the chance to go to their funerals.

Will looked up at the man through his wet lashes, sniffing as he blinked. "Why did this happen to me? My mama and papa..."

Hannibal wished he had the answers. He wished he knew why a woman not even in her forties died of cancer. He wished he knew why his father had to die too. Hannibal wished he had all the answers, wished he could make those heartbreaking sobs stop for just a moment. "I wish I knew, my dear." Hannibal leant over and grabbed his handkerchief, blotting away tears and snot.

"Oh god...oh god..." he shuddered. "I feel awful. I was such an awful son...I never got to say sorry for all the things I did."

"None of that now." Hannibal tutted softly. "None of this is *your* fault, Will. You didn't kill them. You didn't know...it's okay, my dear. Nothing is your fault, you are good. You are a good son." He didn't dare to use past tense, knowing it would only make Will cry harder.

It was sunrise when Will finally fell back asleep. Despite being tired himself, Hannibal stayed awake a little while after Will dozed off, watching the boy. He felt awful, wishing he could take back the comments, wishing he would've taken Will at least once to see them. However, he couldn't dwell on that now. He had to help Will get through it.

He held Will as they slept, hugging him close to his chest, letting him know he was safe. Hannibal didn't move. Not to use the bathroom. Not to eat. He requested that Georgia send up some iced water and a damp washcloth to help soothe his lover when he woke.

Hannibal rested the cloth on his nape, stroking his damp curls as Will arose from his heavy slumber. His head pounded, aching in every corner, reaching down to his toes. It took a moment for things to come back to him. For Will to realise the loss and pain.

His parents were dead.

Tears streamed down his face and Hannibal was quick to catch them, blotting them away like the night before. "Hush, my love...they aren't in pain now." He tried, kissing his head every so often.

Will didn't respond. He didn't talk.

When morning turned to early afternoon, Hannibal insisted that the boy drink. He sat them both up, holding Will close to his chest as he urged him to drink just a few sips.

"That's it." He cooed, kissing Will's warm temples. "Just another sip for me, dear boy." Will drank a few more small sips, pushing the glass away from his face once he was done. His head ached. Pounded. He'd cried so hard and for so long, he felt as though his head could very well explode.

"Hannibal..." The boy croaked after a long period of silence.

"Hm?"

"Why are you keeping me around? I mean.." he chuckled sadly. "They are dead. You are under n-no obligation to allow me to stay."

Hannibal sighed softly, pulling Will closer, kissing his temples once again. The poor boy. "Will...I couldn't possibly kick you out at a time like this. I have *no* intentions of returning you home now. If you'd allow me, I'd like for you to move into my home permanently, you may have your own room...I shall get you all the things you need or want to make you happy here."

"But..." he sniffled, looking up at Hannibal. "Why would you do that? I caused you so much trouble...I was so rotten towards you and everyone else."

"None of that. You have grown since you've arrived here, you are no longer that rotten boy that arrived here. Your parents would be proud. I'm proud." He hummed, carding his fingers through his soft curls. "Now...if I ask Georgia to make you something, will you eat it?"

"No." Hannibal sighed. He expected Will to be this way, but he hated to see it nonetheless.

For days, Will remained in Hannibal's bed. He slept for hours on end, refusing to wake until mid afternoon had greeted the Lecter Estate. He saw no point in waking up if all he would do is cry.

After a week, he finally left the bed. Will woke not long after Hannibal, padding to the bathroom. He felt like a zombie; nose blocked, head blurry and body numb. Will washed his face and body with a washcloth, Georgia by his side, helping him. He felt weak and miserable, hating that he needed help to do such basic things. His parents had died, but he needed to be strong for them.

"Will you eat a meal today, Will?" She asked softly, helping him into a knitted sweater. For days, Will had eaten nothing but crackers and water. Some days, he couldn't even keep that

down.

Will blinked, placing his hand on top of a Georgia's. "Perhaps...Will you make me some French toast?" He asked softly, resting his head on her shoulder. Both Georgia and Hannibal had been by his side, Hannibal only ever left if it were an emergency.

She nodded, smiling, overcome with joy that her friend finally wanted to eat. "Let's go make some. Would you like to sit in the yard and eat? The weather is wonderful today."

"Yes, please." He mumbled, licking his dry lips.

Slowly, she led him downstairs and into the kitchen. Will watched with glazed eyes as Georgia cooked, a small smile upon his lips. He imagined his mother, dressed in a thin summer frock, an apron tied about her middle as she cooked breakfast for them. They had maids, but on Sundays she enjoyed treating the whole house with breakfast. She made the maids extra, encouraging them to eat the toast, bacon and fruit, forcing a few cups of tea down them. Mary, sweet and motherly, had always treated the girls as her own.

"My mother would've loved you," he whispered and Georgia couldn't help but smile. "She would've called you beautiful and made you a wonderful dress. She did that, for our house maids... I wish she could have met you."

"I wish I could have met them too, Will." She smiled, putting two plates of toast and fruit onto a tray, leading him into the sunny yard. A small rabbit hopped around the vast patch of grass, nibbling on sweet green stalks, nose and ears twitching delightfully. It made Will smile. A real smile. "Eat up, before it gets cold."

Will sat down on the swinging chair, taking his plate into his lap. He started with the strawberries, placing some onto the toast before taking a bite, sighing. "Mmh..perfect." He chuckled. Georgia was over the moon with Will's chuckle, beaming to herself as she ate. They hadn't seen him even smile in days.

They continued to eat in silence, watching the white rabbit hop and graze. Will threw half a strawberry across the yard, watching in delight as the same creature happily gobbled it up,

tail twitching. It scampered away after that, full from its feast of grass and a prized strawberry. Will wondered if it would tell its rabbit family about the yard, or about the strawberries and puffy faced boy. He wondered if it would come back again.

Will continued to eat outside in the mornings for the next two weeks. He'd wake after Hannibal, grab a plate of leftovers or cook something simple, and sit outside. He waited patiently for the creature to come back, a plate of strawberries at the ready each time.

"Look!" He gasped, nudging a tired Hannibal. Will pointed to a small rabbit that was feasting on the grass once again. "It's come back, Hannibal..."

Hannibal couldn't help but chuckle, taking a sip from his coffee. "So she has. White rabbits are extremely rare...it's not often they are seen in the wild." He explained, wrapping strands of chocolate curls around his fingers.

Will smiled, throwing one of the larger strawberries across the yard once again. He couldn't help but take it as a sign. A sign that things would be okay again. A sign that his parents weren't mad, that they had loved him all the way up until the end. Things were better, they'd get even better as time went along. "How do you know she's a girl?"

"She's just had a litter. It must be why she was gone for so long. Throw another strawberry, my dear. I'm sure she could use it." He hummed, picking one up from the plate before launching it. The rabbit took one and disappeared, quickly coming back for the second and third one. She'd eat them later, fuelling herself so she could look after her offspring.

"I bet they are beautiful." Will moved closer to Hannibal, nosing his side. "I want to leave the house, Hannibal. I'm ready to go out, just for a little bit." Hannibal's smile only grew, glad Will couldn't see it from his position buried in the man's shoulder.

"Where would you like to go?"

"Afternoon tea. I'd like to go to the tea room in town...but...can we be the only ones there?"

Hannibal nodded, pressing a kiss to the crown of his head. "Go get yourself dressed, my dear. I'll make some calls, okay?"

"Okay." Will smiled softly, chewing his bottom lip. He pulled away from the man and headed inside. It was still early, so Will decided to have a bath. He'd been washing with a cloth since the news reached him, he needed a good soak to wash away all the bad feelings.

He cleaned his hair, treating his curls with soap and conditioner Hannibal had chosen for him. The man had been spoiling him recently - importing books from Lithuania or France, buying him expensive hair care. Will was truly the only thing in Hannibal's heart, the man wanted to make that known.

"I'm ready." Will announced quietly, making his way down the final flight of steps. He wore a floral day dress, tied around the middle with a satin bow. He looked beautiful. Hannibal couldn't help but stare, eyes trailing over the boy slowly.

"You look stunning." He hummed, kissing his forehead before helping Will into his small heels. "I made some calls and booked the tea lounge for just us. No one else will be there." Will smiled and took Hannibal's hand, following him out to the car. It meant the world to Will that he was so understanding. That Hannibal would do anything to make him comfortable and happy.

The drive was comfortable and quiet, Will's hand resting on Hannibal's thigh as he drove. Once they arrived, Hannibal opened all the doors for his lover, showing him the way to their private room for the afternoon. It was beautiful and private, a bunch of blue and pink flowers in the centre of the table, waiting for Will.

"Oh, they are gorgeous." Will beamed, chuckling softly. "You didn't have to..."

"I did. There's something else for you, but you shall have to wait for that." Hannibal wiggled his brows, smiling back at Will. For the past few days, Hannibal had been slipping away to *meetings*. He and Georgia both knew they weren't that at all.

"You spoil me, Hannibal."

"You deserve it, my dear." Will flushed once again, looking away coyly as the waitress brought over a teapot filled with steaming tea. It smelt sweet and lemony, just like home. Hannibal poured them both a mug as he spoke to the waitress, ordering one of each flavour of Macarons. "You can try each one then," he chuckled.

Will couldn't help but be wooed by the man before him. After all the trouble he'd put him through. After being so horrid and rotten. After calling him names, Hannibal still loved him. He loved him wholly, even though their relationship had yet to develop past holding one another and simply talking. Will liked the raspberry one the most, along with lemon and chocolate. He'd tried each one, taking a small bite, handing the rest to Hannibal if he thought the other might enjoy it more.

He sighed happily, digging into a third raspberry macaron. "Mmh...these are wonderful." Will cooed, reaching his free hand over to lace their fingers together, squeezing Hannibal's hand.

"Would you like a box to take home? I can get you a box of cake too." He offered with a smile, chuckling at the way Will eagerly nodded his head, curls bouncing. Hannibal politely asked for a box of macarons and two slices of chocolate and red velvet cake to go. "Before we leave. I have something for you."

Will's eyes lit up with curiosity, brows raised. "Hannibal. You are spoiling me, so so much." Hannibal shook his head, quietly insisting that he loves to do so. The man reached into his pocket, producing a black, velvet box.

"I'm sure you have noticed my absence in the evenings these last few days." Hannibal started. "I'm afraid I told a lie when I said I was working late. I was with an acquaintance of mine, working on this for you. Please, open it." He handed the box over, holding his breath as Will undid the ribbon around it, snapping open the box with a small gasp.

Inside was a silver necklace with a wonderful locket pendant. It had been handcrafted for Will, his initials engraved lightly on the back. It was simple, but beautiful. Will looked at the man before opening up the locket, petting out a little sob of joy at the pictures that met him. His parents. His parents smiled back at him from inside the heart, as happy and wonderful as he had remembered.

"Hannibal...!" He cried, tears running down his face. "Oh, goodness. It's beautiful. I've never seen something so beautiful before." Will sniffled, taking the necklace out of its case.

"I thought you might like it, darling." The older man stood, gently taking the necklace from Will's hands. He brushed away the curls he loved so dearly, placing the necklace around his neck gently. "I know how important it is to keep them close to your heart... Why not take it literally?" Hannibal hummed, kissing his temples.

Will blinked, nuzzling Hannibal with a happy sound. "I love it, Hannibal. It's perfect." He turned himself, hands cupping Hannibal's handsome face. Will pushed up the man's glasses for him, looking up into his dark eyes lovingly. Suddenly, his lips were pressed to Hannibal's and everything else melted away.

It was much better than kissing anyone else. It pushed away Randall's cold, too wet lips from his mind. It wasn't sloppy. It wasn't rushed or unwanted. It was slow, sweet and full of love. Will sighed softly, pulling away with a flutter of his lashes. Suddenly, things weren't as bad as they had seemed in the morning.

He had never felt so utterly seen. Things had never been so clear to him before. It was clear, there in the tea room, that Hannibal was the one that would love him so wholly. Hannibal would be the one to hold him when the rain poured, to cook with him, and the man he would make tender love to on lazy afternoons when the sun began to set. Although it wasn't spoken, Hannibal felt the same. Hannibal knew that the young man sat before him would be the one to take his name.

"Hannibal..."

"Will..." he kissed him again, much slower and sweeter this time. Hannibal cupped his face, tongue exploring his mouth in the privacy of their tea room. Will let out a soft moan, unable to hold back from expressing just how good the simple kiss had felt.

"I want to go home. Now." Will demanded softly. The pair didn't waste any time, paying for their tea and take-out treats before rushing to the car. Will pressed more kisses to the others lips once they were in the car, whining softly for more. He wanted it. *Needed* it.

Hannibal drove home quickly, almost recklessly. He skipped a red light, pulling back into their large drive in half the time it would usually take. Another kiss was shared. Much more heated than the rest.

"Carry me inside." Will whispered, nipping Hannibal's bottom lip as he pulled away.

"Of course, spoilt boy." The older man chuckled, getting out of his side of the car. He scooped Will into his arms and carried him inside bridal style. Like reckless teens, the pair headed up to Hannibal's room within an instant, kissing and laughing as they went.

With Hannibal, Will didn't have to forget his previous life and everything bad. But, he was encouraged to deal with it and find peace and acceptance.

Closing the bedroom door, their kisses became much more heated. Passionate. Will's heart raced and thumped in his chest, eager for Will to hear the song deep inside him.

Chapter six

Chapter Notes

Very NSFW chapter!

"H-Hannibal-" Will mewled, wrapping his arms around Hannibal's neck. His heart raced and thumped in his chest as Hannibal kissed down his neck softly.

"Yes, my dear?" He purred, hands snaking down to squeeze his ass ever so slightly. Will's sounds sounded beautiful, flooding his ears like the most magnificent symphony ever. Gently, he moved Will to the bed. Just by his movements, Hannibal could tell his lover was shy.

"I..." he whimpered, falling against the sheets with a little huff. Will allowed Hannibal to remove his dress, leaving him in his loose silk and lace undergarments. "I don't want to have intercourse yet..." Will blurted out as Hannibal kissed his collarbones and shoulders.

"Being intimate is not just about penetrative sex, my love." His fingers hooked under the elastic of Will's undergarments, asking permission. Will nodded, lifting his hips to make things easier. "I must show you the greater side of things. Your previous lovers appear to be very selfish."

Will huffed, feeling hot and embarrassed. He'd had sex before, but never once had he felt quite so exposed. Now, Will felt as though Hannibal could see every inch of him completely uninterrupted. He could see the freckles that dusted his body, the faint love bites left from the hungry mouth of Randall Tier. He could see Will's plush thighs, wet cunt half exposed as Will shyly parted his legs. Every inch of it was perfect.

Slowly, Hannibal kissed down Will's soft body, nosing at him. He pushed open his legs, nipping now at the flesh until he was kissing over his cunt. Will whined and shuddered, squirming a little in an attempt to deal with the pleasure coming his way. Never once, despite his multiple sexual experiences, had anyone ever performed oral on him.

"Pl-Please...give me some more..." the boy whispered, voice shy and soft. Will spread his legs further, inviting Hannibal to lick and kiss sloppily. His tongue explored the boy's blushing cunt, sucking sweetly on his already throbbing clit. It amused him just how easily the boy seemed to get aroused, dripping wet within seconds.

"You taste...devine." Hannibal purred from his position between Will's shaky thighs.

Will could only shake his head, letting out a loud moan as the man's tongue dipped inside of him, exploring further. "D-Don't... *ah*... don't be gross." Another lick. Will whimpered, fingers tangling in Hannibal's ashen hair, toes already curling as a new sensation bubbled in his stomach.

"Hush, now." Growled the man, burying his face into the boy's cunt once more. Hannibal couldn't get enough, groaning and moaning into the bitter-sweet tasting flesh, slick dribbling down his chin. He returned to suckling on his clit, purring as he felt it pulse and throb against his tongue. Will couldn't help but indulge himself in the pleasure, allowing for it to wash over him in magnificent waves.

He toyed with his nipples, gasping in shock at how *good* the combination felt. "Please...Please...a little more?" Will mumbled through a pleased slur, panting almost animalistically as Hannibal worked his magic. The boy didn't have to ask twice. Hannibal wouldn't make him beg. Slowly and gently, Hannibal slid a deft finger inside his lover, purring softly at the sweet noises that fell from Will's lips.

One finger quickly became two, slowly massaging and pumping into Will. He whined and mewled, throwing his head back against the silken pillows, curls becoming unruly. An unfamiliar heat flooded his stomach, knotting and twisting into beautiful shapes as Hannibal covered his thighs and blushing cunt in sweet kisses. No one had ever touched him in the way Hannibal did. No one ever took the time to give him the care and pleasure he deserved. They never cared enough for him.

But, Hannibal did.

"O-Oh! Goodness!" Will cried, heels digging into the bed as his body began to tremble. Hannibal was still buried happily between his thighs, paying attention to his clit whilst his fingers gathered a steady pace. He was simply in awe of just how beautiful Will looked, splay

out on the bed just for him. If he wanted, he could happily make love to Will then and there, but he'd wait. He'd wait days, weeks, a whole lifetime until Will was ready for him.

Hannibal leant up, pressing a passionate kiss to the boy's lips. "How do you feel, my darling?" He whispered, burying his face in the damn crook of Will's blushed neck.

"I...I feel funny." He mumbled back, fingers digging into the man's back, nails leaving light marks.

"How so?" Hannibal chuckled, hooking his fingers inside the boy, pushing them all the more deeper. "Tell me, dear boy." He cooed, peppering kisses to his neck. Will squirmed, hips bucking as he tried to ride the man's heavenly fingers. It took him a few moments to even register Hannibal's words, let alone think of a response.

Will huffed, toes curling as pleasure coursed through him once again. "I-I...I don't know. Please don't stop. Please don't stop." He whined out, brows knitting together. "Please..."

"Of course I won't." He reassured, kissing back down his chest to return to his blushed cunt. Hannibal kissed and licked, tongue lapping up the bitter sweet liquid, groaning happily. Will relaxed once more, fingers returning to tangle in Hannibal's silver locks, tugging and pulling desperately. Moans quickly filled the room, cries and whines falling from Will's kiss-swollen lips.

The feeling in the pit of his stomach only grew, flooding down his legs all the way to his toes as it consumed him. It swallowed him whole and within an instant an orgasm came crashing over him. Will cried out as he squirted around the man's fingers, letting out shocked cries at the new feeling. It was much different to how he had made himself come. He grabbed a pillow, covering his face with it to hide the embarrassed blush that covered his whole face and neck.

Hannibal was quite surprised himself. He happily lapped up the mess, purring in delight as he pulled his fingers out to suck them clean.

"Messy boy," chides the man in a playful tone, kissing Will's thighs lovingly. "There's no need to hide from me, Darling. Take that pillow from your face, it's okay." Hannibal softened his voice, gently prying the silk pillow from Will's face. "Why are you so embarrassed?"

"That's..." Will panted, looking away. "That's the first time I've ever done... *that*. I...don't even know what *that* was." He squirmed away, slowly getting up from the bed to clean himself up - much to Hannibal's disappointment. The older man sighed, shaking his head a little as he stood, pulling Will as close as he could.

"You needn't be so embarrassed, my dear." Hannibal cooed, brushing a damp curl from his lover's face. "Lots of people do the same as you did... Did it feel good for you?" The man continued, brushing their noses together before kissing Will softly. Will's honest pleasure meant the most to him, he didn't care if his needs were sated, as long as Will was happy and satisfied.

"But..."

"It's natural." Hannibal interrupted before Will had the chance to say much more. "You might not do it every time we are intimate with one another. I suppose these boy's haven't shown you before how normal it is."

Will whined, looking away from Hannibal shyly. He wasn't convinced. It was a one time thing and Will was sure it would never happen again. "Whatever..." he mumbled, pulling on Hannibal's soft robe.

"Now," he laughed, scooping the boy into his arms, lifting him from the floor. "Don't get sore with me."

Afternoon tea became a regular treat for the pair. If Hannibal finished work in time, he would take his sweet lover out for the afternoon. Will always dressed accordingly, picking out the most beautiful floral patterns or forest green shades to wear. Never once did he fail to wear

the locket, always allowing it to dangle from his neck as a bittersweet reminder of what he had lost.

Will missed his parents more and more as each day passed. The idea of never seeing them again was one that terrified Will, but Hannibal seemed to make things better. He managed to brush away all those fears and worries without fail. He'd coo at Will, brushing away his tears with a gentle thumb as they lay in bed at night.

"Hannibal..." Will whispered one night, burying his face in the man's soft chest. They had spent many evenings in bed, holding one another as they kissed and touched until their heart's content. That night had been no different.

The older man raised his brows, kissing his forehead. "Yes, darling?" Hannibal played with his curls, wrapping them around and around his fingers, watching them uncoil.

"I..." he sighed, chewing his bottom lip. The words were right on the tip of his tongue, itching to come out as he buried his face deeper into Hannibal's chest.

"I know you do, Will." Hannibal whispered with a smile. "I do too. There's no rush, say it when you are ready, shy little thing." He chuckled softly, kissing the young man's head once more. "I never knew a boy so rotten and...sassy would come to be shy like this."

Will laughed, playfully pushing Hannibal's face away from his own. "There was a lot you didn't know about me, Hannibal." He shot back with a smile Hannibal had come to love with every fibre of his being. He'd spent sleepless nights in his study drawing that smile, ensuring he'd never forget it - even when he was old.

The older man simply smiled in return, towering over Will in bed, leaning down for a kiss. It was soft, slow and ever so sweet. Will's lips tasted like sugary icing and tea, the memory of their evening supper still clinging to his tongue. His lips were as soft as ever, especially since Hannibal had recently insisted on him treating them with oils. Will didn't mind it, as long as it was Hannibal doing all of the pampering for him. He'd simply sit and allow the man's fingers to run along his skin. It was a routine for them now, one Will didn't want to stop any time soon.

Hannibal shifted, breaking the kiss to move his mouth down. He kissed from his shoulders to his chest, humming in satisfaction when Will let out a soft mewl. His tongue glided over hard nipples, sucking softly before continuing to kiss down. It was late, but Hannibal didn't care. How could he stop now?

"Hannibal..." Will panted, fingers lacing through ashen hair as Hannibal's kisses reached his thighs. "I...want to make love to you..."

The confession made Hannibal pause, smiling softly. He and Will had been intimate on multiple occasions, but they hadn't had sex just yet. Hannibal was happy to wait, until Will told him otherwise. He wanted it to be special.

"Are you sure about this?" Hannibal hummed, using his fingers to trace shapes onto the milky flesh of his lover's thigh. The pair were both aroused - Hannibal didn't want the decision to be solely based on that.

Will nodded, looking down. "I've been thinking about it, Hannibal. I want you to make love to me...and I never want to make love to anyone else. Ever." He smiled, thumb brushing over the older man's bottom lip. They both knew what Will was saying. The boy no longer wanted to undress for sticky-fingered, no good boys, that would only break his heart or disgust him. He wanted Hannibal. He wanted the older man to consume him. To need nothing other than Will to survive.

"Then," Hannibal chuckled, kissing Will's thighs slowly, "Your wish is my command, sweet boy."

The kisses moved from Will's thighs to his blushed cunt, kissing and licking, taking his time. Despite the lateness of the hour, Hannibal wished to take his time. The boy would unravel in no time.

Hannibal's tongue worked its magic, dipping inside Will, eager to have another taste. It didn't take long for Will to be a mess yet again, hands gripping onto the sheet as he moaned and mewled - rather thankful that Hannibal's room was far away from anyone else's. Will was never one to be quiet, even when pleasure was removed. Such strong lungs. The older man was proud, his chest swelling and heart thumping as Will let out little cries of;

" Oh, goodness!", "Yes! Yes! There!" And "Please! Don't stop...More!"

Sometimes, Will's sounds were something that could be compared to a royal symphony. Loud. Bright. Full of life that brought such pleasure to Hannibal's ears.

When fingers were introduced, the symphony only got louder. Stronger. So much more *beautiful*. Will's back arched from the bed, creating enough room for Hannibal's hand to slide under and hold him even closer. The boy's skin was smooth and sweaty, malleable under Hannibal's strong, unforgiving hands. In their moments of intimacy, any cell of violence that lived in Hannibal melted away. With Will, he was a pure man - without sin.

Lips came crashing together as Will climbed the peak to his first orgasm of the night. He wrapped his legs around Hannibal, reaching down to take his cock in hand, giving the older man the attention he deserved. With a groan, Hannibal slipped his tongue into the young boy's mouth, tasting him.

"Please..." Will whined, digging the heels of his soft feet into Hannibal's back, encouraging him. He couldn't wait much longer. Will was ready. He needed Hannibal.

The older man smiled, kissing him once more. "You are most impatient, dear boy." Hannibal whispered, pressing kisses to the sweet skin of Will's neck, inhaling the scent that he loved ever so dearly. "How could I ever say no? Your mouth is so gorgeous...I'd never deny you anything."

"Then, please, make love to me."

"Hush, now."

He nodded, looking up at Hannibal with a loving expression. Will shuffled slightly, getting more comfortable before relaxing completely, allowing Hannibal to do all the work.

Slowly, Hannibal lined himself up, giving a few gentle strokes of his cock before making any more movements. Large hands came to rest on Will's thighs, holding them open, keeping Will in place as he slowly pushed inside - just the head, that's all the boy needed for now.

Watching Will react was good enough.

The boy's mouth opened in a pleased 'O', allowing moans to flood out, joined together with slurred words and filthy swear words. *Hannibal couldn't help but wonder who taught those to Will.* His back arched once again, fingers snaking to lace in Hannibal's soft hair. It was right. Everything was right.

"Oh! God!" Will cried as Hannibal pushed deeper inside. It felt almost as though he was being ripped apart. Will had been with other men. He'd had sex, but never with someone quite like Hannibal. He was so much bigger. He filled Will so well. He touched every inch of Will without actually touching him. Will could feel the man in his stomach, in his toes and in every single strand of hair that blessed his body and kept him warm.

Hannibal's hands moved from the boy's thighs to his waist, holding him so tightly he was sure to leave bruises behind. But, it appeared Will didn't care much about that. After what felt like hours, Hannibal fully seated himself inside the sweet thing, their bodies flush together. He allowed for Will to get adjusted, using this time to slowly circle the boy's swollen clit with his thumb, watching with a lazy smile as Will moaned and gasped.

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It wasn't long before Hannibal had set a steady pace, thrusting inside the moaning boy without mercy. Will had his legs pressed to his chest, arms hooked around his knees to keep them in place, toes curled and thighs shaking. Hannibal had seen pornographic material in his life, but nothing had ever been so utterly pornographic in his time on the earth. Will was spouting the most beautiful, whorish sounds the older man had ever heard.

Was Will making up new curse words?

Hannibal had no idea, but he wasn't going to shut his gorgeous boy up any time soon.

"Oh, goodness!" Will cried, looking down at where they met, mewling at the sight. "F-Fuck...harder...please!"

"Are you sure, dear boy?" Hannibal asked, voice gruff and full of pleasure. The man was steadily losing his composure, getting more vocal as time went on.

Will simply nodded, Hannibal's cock punching any words out of him. The poor boy could only moan and whine, eyes closed, brows bunched together.

Hannibal smiled a little, cupping the boy's face with his large hands. He swiped his thumb over Will's cheek, taking in just how beautiful he looked, slowing his thrusts entirely for a moment or two. "Tell me if it's too much, Mylimasis..."

That's all the warning Will got. Hands moved to grip his thighs, holding Will down against the bed firmly. Within an instant, Will was seeing stars. Hannibal snapped his hips, fucking into Will as if his life depended on it. As though he might die if he were to stop. The older man groaned, mumbling under his breath in a foreign tongue, praising Will's body and mind.

Will writhed and cried out as Hannibal took exactly what he wanted from the boy. It felt as though he was being torn in two, ripped apart by the sheer size of Hannibal's uncut cock. Shakily, Will reached a hand down to toy with their clit, rubbing quickly as pleasure began to build in the pit of his stomach.

"I'm...I'm...g-gonna...!" Will stuttered, hardly able to form one coherent sentence. "Gonna... Gonna..."

Hannibal chuckled, turning his head to kiss the palm of Will's foot and ankle. "Come for me, sweet thing..." He urged, pushing Will's hand away from his cunt, doing all the work so Will could focus on nothing but his own pleasure.

The young boy nodded, mouth falling open in a pleased scream as orgasm flooded his whole entire body. Will's legs trembled as he breached his orgasm, too lost in it all to realise he was squirting around Hannibal once again. Will felt as though he had been transported to some alternate plane of reality, where his body weighed nothing and his mind was utterly blank.

No soft voices. No strange thoughts. Just...empty. Will loved it.

Hannibal could sense that Will was drifting away from the moment, so stunned by his orgasm that he needed to disappear for a second. For a moment, he allowed it.

"Come back..." Hannibal whispered, nose buried in the sweaty crook of Will's blushed neck. "Come back to me, sweet thing...don't run." The older man's words had worked, wrapping around Will's brain and body like a lasso, pulling him back to what mattered most.

It didn't take much longer for Hannibal to come undone, pulling out to paint Will's stomach with hot white. He stroked himself a few times, milking his cock onto the boy's stomach until he had nothing else to give. He let out praises in Lithuanian, singing a song for Will in a language only he knew.

Just for Will. No one else.

" *Goodness...* " Will gasped, watching as Hannibal flooded his release. The boy pouted, glossy eyes drifting up to Hannibal's face. He was.... *disappointed*.

"What's wrong, Mylimasis?" Hannibal cooed, brows furrowed in worry.

"You...didn't come inside me."

Filthy boy. Hannibal couldn't help but smile and chuckle, giving Will a reassuring kiss. "My dearest boy...we don't want to give you a baby just yet, hm? If you wish for me to come

inside I suppose I must call the doctors and get you a prescription." Hannibal hummed, leaning to press loving kisses to Will's shaky thighs before slowly getting up from the bed.

Will watched, smiling lazily as Hannibal moved to the adjoining bathroom, disappearing to retrieve a damp washcloth.

"Birth control?"

"Yes, Will." Hannibal hummed once again, sitting on the edge of the bed. With a feather lightness, he began wiping the mess from Will's stomach. "Of course, it won't guarantee complete protection...but it will act as security until we find ourselves ready for a family."

A glowing blush painted Will's cheeks, eyes twinkling. "You would like a family?" Will asked softly, fingers running up and down the older man's wrist.

"I never saw myself as a family man. However, the idea of a child with you...makes my heart swell, Will. I'd give you and our child the world, if you wished to have one with me."

"Oh...you are *cute* ." Will giggled, sitting up slowly. He wrapped his arms around Hannibal, pressing delicate kisses to his toned shoulders. "I can feel the heat of your blush, Hannibal. My sweet man...your cheeks are like primrose."

It had been a while since Hannibal had blushed at something as simple as words. Yet, he found himself doing things he'd never done before. Feelings that hadn't graced him in decades. The older man was in love. It was all consuming, ripping his heart out and replacing it with floral bouquets.

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Before heading to rest, Hannibal made the move to change the sheets. Although he wanted to absorb the scent of Will, wet sheets simply wouldn't do. Wet was replaced with dry, and the pair soon found slumber in one another's arms.

That night, he dreamt of Mischa. She had stayed the same age, whilst Hannibal aged and changed. They sat together, in a vast field, all alone. Mischa sat comfortably on her brother's lap, holding his hands with her own tiny ones, squeezing until her knuckles had turned white with effort.

She didn't speak, for she didn't need to. Hannibal knew why she was there. There had been many years where Hannibal dreamt of Mischa - often she would cry, her innocent face covered in soot and painted with raw hunger. But now...she looked fresh. Her cheeks plump and fat, rosy with youthful health. Her blonde hair curled into ringlets, tied with the richest satin.

She was healthy. She was safe.

Her tiny little hands moved to place a daisy and daffodil behind each of Hannibal's ears. Forgiveness. A new beginning. Hannibal smiled, kissing her head before the girl got up and simply...walked away.

Hannibal felt no urge to chase her. In past dreams he may have run until his legs fell off to see her once again. She waved and Hannibal waved back, watching as she walked off to the edge of the field, entering somewhere else. Somewhere safe. Somewhere where Hannibal could call upon her once again if he so needed. But, for now, both were tucked away safely.

He didn't wake covered in sweat or worry. Instead, he woke up with Will pressed to his chest, tangled with one another as the morning sun crept through the curtains.

"Good morning, my love..." Hannibal mumbled, voice thick with sleep.

"Mmh...mornin', darling..." Will whispered back, eyes still shut, half asleep.

Chapter Seven

Chapter Notes

After two years I am back on this Fic! Thank you to anyone who stayed around and hello to anyone new!

NSFW up ahead in this chapter 💕

- this is not beta/proof read. If anything is spelt wrong or grammar is off, please ignore -

Sunlight danced across Will's sleeping form, turning his hair into ringlets of bronze and gold. He buried his face further into the fur on Hannibal's chest, sighing softly. Birds sang quietly, mourning the coming end of summer beautifully. Soon, the leaves would change and winter would come around once again.

Hannibal pressed a kiss to Will's curls before, regretfully, pulling himself out of bed. He washed with a damp washcloth, selecting a suit from his wardrobe. Although he wished to spend all his days with Will in the safety of their bed, he had business to attend to still. Christmas would be soon approaching and he had plenty of Balls and Galas he intended to attend, with Will at his side, of course.

"Mornin'," Will's sleepy voice drawled, his angelic figure leaning in the doorway of the bathroom. "It's only six and a quarter, Hannibal. Why are you getting dressed?"

A chuckle escaped from Hannibal's lips, if only accidental. He looked over from the mirror, shaving cream covering half of his sculpted jaw. He took a second to admire the boy, committing his mussed hair and love-bitten body to memory. Now, Will was claimed. He was claimed by a *real* man, not some sticky-fingered schoolboy that cared only for the pleasure given to his pathetic prick. He bit back a snarl, the memory of Randall Tier still fresh in his mind.

"My darling boy, I have matters to attend to." Hannibal continued to lather his face with shaving foam, reaching for the shaving blade on his countertop. "It's reaching the festive season and our friend Doctor Chilton wishes to invite us to his Ball. Whilst a paper invitation would do for most, for Chilton, it does not."

Will couldn't help the scoff that followed, watching the soft bob of Hannibal's Adam's Apple. He was gorgeous, even in the morning, his expensive clothes and clear display of riches gone. Will felt lucky, to see Hannibal that way. Naked, truly. "I'm not surprised that everything he does is fanciful. How does he have so many friends?"

"Not friends," Hannibal corrected, wiping the blade on his damp cloth. Once he was cleanly shaven, he washed his face a second time, applying imported moisturizer to his smooth skin. "Acquaintances. Would you like to accompany me to his home?"

Whilst spending the day at the Chilton Manor sounded like hell on earth, Will didn't want to spend his day alone. It had been a few months since the passing of his parents, but the aching sense of loneliness always seemed to find him when he was alone. He fiddled with his locket, tracing over the engravement on the back. "I can't promise I won't upset that *twitchy man*," Will smiled, rotten.

He pressed a small kiss to Hannibal's cheek, pulling on his button-down before leaving to his own bedroom, finding that he had a gentle limp from the night before. Will flushed at that realisation, knowing he would feel the internal mark Hannibal had left on him.

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"Good morning, Georgia." Will smiled almost dreamily at the girl when he returned to his own chambers, happy to see that she had gone to see him. Despite everything that Will had gone through, he looked more than happy that morning.

Georgia blushed deeply, a mischievous smile crossing her lips. "You did not!" she gasped, not needing Will to confirm what she was thinking. "Oh, Will, How scandalous! You are like a nymphet...I've never seen someone so desired before."

The boy giggled, sitting down with his friend on the bed. He bit his lip, lashes fluttering. "Oh, Georgia...It was magnificent! I felt like I have been thrust between Heaven and Hell itself!" Will recounted dramatically, clutching at the fabric of Hannibal's shirt.

“It’s so great to see you smiling, Will...” Georgia cooed, taking the boy’s hand in her own, squeezing. “Do you love him?”

Will blinked, nodding slowly. “I do, more than anything...Oh, he is wonderful.” the boy sighed, squeezing once more before retracting his hand, standing up to open his wardrobe. “Although, good things must come to an end. Frederick Chilton has requested our company, will you help to get me ready?”

She nodded, standing with him. “Whilst Chilton is painfully annoying, his parties are always spectacularly crafted, even these smaller ones.” Georgia sighed, plucking a dress from the closet. Hannibal had gifted Will a few in the past months, providing him with more weather-appropriate clothing. She helped Will into his dusty blue dress, smoothing out the long sleeves lovingly.

Over his time at the Lecter Estate, the pair had grown close, much like siblings. Georgia felt love for the boy, thankful that he treated her as his equal, as opposed to a servant - like some people did. They had spent summer evenings by the lake and on the grass, shopping at food markets for fresh fruit. Life felt much less lonely now that they had one another, and Will knew that.

“Thank you, Georgia.” Will squeezed her hand once again, turning to face the girl. “When Chilton hosts his winter Ball, might you like to come with me? I think shopping for a gown would be awfully fun.”

The girl's smile faltered slightly, looking away. Embarrassed. “I am afraid I can’t afford a dress good enough for something like that. Count Lecter pays handsomely, but Christmas is expensive.”

Another gentle squeeze, drawing Georgia’s eyes back over to Will’s. “Nonsense, Cher. I would like to buy you a dress, as a gift. You know I will not take no for an answer!”

“Will!” Georgia gasped, lightheaded at the offer. “Are you sure? How can I repay you?”

“By letting me do it, Georgia. I have to go...I shall be sure to ask the theme.” He kissed her cheek as they linked arms, walking down to the entryway to meet Hannibal.

Dark eyes shone as they landed on Will’s slim figure, hugged by the dusty blue fabric of silk and chiffon, silver necklace hung around his neck. As if their minds were synced, Hannibal had selected a very similar colour tie to wear that afternoon. He held out his hand, taking it gently.

“Don’t you look beautiful, My darling boy.” Hannibal purred, turning to Georgia. “Thank you for assisting my darling. I would like for you to take the afternoon off, paid.”

Georgia ducked her head in thanks, smiling brightly over at Will. If Hannibal was going to be so kind and happy, she could only pray they stayed together forever. Without another word, Will and Hannibal made their way to the carriage. Although Hannibal could drive, events as such required the formality of a carriage.

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Chilton clasped his hands together, a wide grin spreading across his face as Hannibal and Will were brought into the drawing-room by servants. He didn’t know them as well as Hannibal knew his own set, nor were they treated the same. Whilst he had invited the pair, having them *actually* show up was a treat. Knowing Count Lecter was a privilege and it made Chilton look more powerful than he really was.

“It is wonderful to see you, truly!” The man laughed, his eyes flitting over both men, slower when it came to Will. The boy smiled, demure and elegant, brushing a wayward curl from his face.

“Why, we wouldn’t miss it for the world, Doctor Chilton.” Will smiled again, watching as Chilton preened. The correct title. What a treat.

Hannibal nodded in agreement, accepting a glass of scotch from a polite waiter hired for the occasion. It was good, but not great. “Yes, Will is quite right. Your parties are always a treat.”

Not the truth, but not a lie either. He looked over to Will, his free hand resting on the small of Will's back.

Chiltons surprised expression was not missed, and neither were the curious glances from other guests. Alana Bloom and her fiancé, Margot Verger. Jack and Bella Crawford. A few people Hannibal had not met. Their looks were not judgemental, simply curious about *who* had broken Hannibal Lecters bachelor lifestyle.

Will had seen these people before, but he had never truly met them.

“I suppose, now more than ever, is an appropriate time to mention our relationship.” Hannibal cleared his throat, not missing the cheeky smile on his boy's lips. “Will and I have entered a romantic relationship. He will now attend events with me and shall be spoiled beyond anyone's imagination. Please, make him feel at home.”

Jack held up his glass, a silent approval. He and Bella had been married since their teens, their love unwavering. They had no children of their own, but their life was fulfilled by other means.

Alana Bloom smiled, nodding at Will when Hannibal's speech had come to an end, inviting him over. “I must say, you look gorgeous. This is certainly your colour.”

Will chuckled, curtsying politely to both young women, who giggled and waved him off. “Thank you, you both look charming, too.” He extended a slender hand, shaking gently.

“Alana Bloom. This is my wife-to-be, Margot.” The woman motioned to the blonde beside her, both clad in darker-coloured material. It suited them. There was something dark about Margot.

“It's nice to meet you, Will. There's been a lot of talk about you in the past year.” Margot smiled, tight and small. She didn't enjoy public events and, much like Will, she didn't enjoy Chilton. “We haven't had the chance to be introduced until now. Were you not invited to the Crawfords Anniversary celebration?”

Will frowned, his eyes casting towards the ground. He shook his head, looking back through his lashes. "My parents passed away and my mourning period has only recently come to a close. I'm afraid I was sick with grief. I heard it was a splendid celebration."

In time with one another, their expressions softened. Alana's hand came to Will's clothed shoulder, squeezing gently. "We are deeply sorry, Will. Losing a parent is an awful thing, I only hope that your heart is mended."

"I lost my brother this past year. I can't imagine losing my parents." Margot sighed, her sadness a falsity.

That was it.

Will looked over his shoulder at Hannibal, smiling gently to himself. "My heart is feeling whole once more, thank you. I'm sorry for the loss of your brother, Margot. Please, excuse me, I need some fresh air." He bowed his head once more, making a seamless escape to the hosts' vast garden.

His dainty heels did nothing to disturb the grass beneath them, leaving it trimmed and perfect. A few leaves on nearby trees had started to metamorphosize. Will took a deep breath, breathing in the autumn air, pausing in his tracks.

"I didn't mean to spook you," a young-sounding, accented voice broke the pleasant silence. Will turned to spot a man older than him, but younger than all the others. He was handsome, British and well-dressed. "Chilton's property is too nice to refuse myself a stroll. Antony, and you are?"

"Will Graham," Will smiled gently, a little sad that his solo walk was interrupted. However, Antony seemed nice enough. "It's lovely, isn't it? I prefer the gardens of my own home, however, this is a close second."

The young man laughed, breaking the distance between them, walking alongside Will.
“You’re from the south, no? I know a Louisianan accent when I hear one.”

He nodded, picking a flower from the bush. “I am, yes. You’re further from home than I am, Antony. What brings you here?”

“I recently finished my education in Europe and wished to see what America had to offer. I must say, I am enjoying it so far.” He chuckled, friendly and open. A small bell rang and Hannibal appeared on the porch, motionlessly signalling for Will to come inside.

Their meal was ready.

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Chilton had sat them strategically, having the people of most value closer to him. That, of course, meant Will had to listen to his drivvle for even longer. He sighed softly, longing almost, brushing his shoed-covered foot against Hannibal’s ankle.

Soon, they could go home. Soon, Will would be back in his arms. For now, he could at least enjoy the wonderful food.

“This is wonderful, Doctor Chilton. You must thank you catering staff for me,” Will plastered his face with a sickeningly sweet smile, buttering the older man up. Chilton smiled back, looking at Will over the rim of his glass, practically preening.

“Thank you, Dear Will. If you like this food, then I assure you, you will love the food at my ball. I’m having a chef some all the way from France, can you believe?”

Will could believe.

He smiled prettily in return, sipping on the soda made especially for him. “Good Lords, Chilton! You will be spoiling us! I actually had a request, regarding your Ball.” Will bit the plush of his bottom lip, ignoring the eyebrow raise from Hannibal.

Chilton hummed, fork to mouth. “And what might that be?”

“I was hoping to bring a friend of mine with me, if it wouldn’t be too much trouble. I have told her just how *excellent* your Balls are and she is simply dying to come.” Will’s lashes fluttered, the art of flattery able to get him to the moon and back if he so wished. Chilton laughed, looking between Will and Hannibal, nodding after a moment.

“Of course you may. Another guest at the table is no inconvenience for me, Will.”

Although it wasn’t said, it was clear that Chilton’s choice made Will happy, which, in turn, made Hannibal happy. Will could’ve asked for the party to be unicorn themed, and Chilton may have agreed if it meant Hannibal was happy.

“Thank you, Doctor Chilton.” Will bowed his head, continuing with his meal with no further issue.

As intended, dinner was splendid and the conversation flowed easily. Talks of trips, past and present. Chatter amongst the women about new designers. Will tuned it out, focusing on the fantasy of what would happen when they arrived home.

Hannibal, after dinner and appropriate pleasantries, bid everyone a goodbye for both him and Will. With his hand on Will’s slender waist, they made their way back to the carriage, ready to turn in for the rest of the day.

“Now, sweet thing, was that so disastrous?” Hannibal smiled down at Will, their bodies pressed close, aching to hold one another. The older man was slightly surprised that Will had lasted so long, having prepared himself for an episode.

“Yes.” Will sighed, as dramatic as ever. “I would have rather peeled the skin from my fingertips and then dipped them in lemon juice.”

It was Hannibal’s turn to laugh, burying his nose into the styled mess of curls. “Oh, Darling, you are rotten.”

“I am. I missed you, Hannibal.” The boy sighed again, soft and serious. Although they had been together all day, Will had missed being painfully close to Hannibal. He missed the skin on skin contact, their kisses and loving touches. He was deprived and starved. However ridiculous the notion sounded, Hannibal understood completely.

He too ached for Will, more so than he allowed for himself to let on. “I missed you too, darling boy. When we are home, we shall spend the evening bathing...I’ll light a fire and make you something delicious. We’ll make love until we fall asleep.” Hannibal promised, his words spoken soft and sweet.

Will looked up through his lashes again, a small smile on his otherwise pouty lips. “Until we fall asleep? By the fire?” He fluttered his lashes. Hannibal nodded. He couldn’t say no.

Hannibal made his staff aware that they would not need to prepare dinner that evening, giving them all the evening off. He smiled, polite, dismissing them all to simply do as they pleased. Once that was settled, Hannibal guided Will toward the elevator, eager to get him undressed.

“Can we eat by the fire, too?” Will asked, his mess of curls resting on Hannibal’s chest. “In your study?”

The gentle *click* of the bathroom door reminded Will that he had been promised a bath. Whilst he could bathe himself, and often did, he enjoyed when Hannibal took charge. The weeks after the death of his parents had left him weak and immovable, Hannibal had doted on him endlessly. Their collection of imported soaps, bath oils and any form of washing agent doubled since then.

Deft fingers moved to help undress Will, ensuring that the devilish boy didn't have to lift a finger. He undid ties and ribbons, folding the dress once Will had stepped out of it. "Since you behaved so well today, I don't see why not. Is there something in particular that you'd like for me to make?"

Will thought about it as Hannibal guided him to sit down on the vanity stool, helping the boy out of his sheer stockings. It was completely non-sexual in the moment, but Hannibal would file the memory away for when he was alone. The boy lifted his hips a fraction, lace panties slipping down his thighs, over his feet, joining the rest of his clothes. "Chicken and dumplings..." Will drawled, eyes half closed as he imagined the meal in his mind. Something his mother made him when he was unwell, when he'd had a hard day and needed comfort past what she could supply. He craved home, even if he didn't say it. Although Will's mourning process was not at all unique from the rest, it was different to how Hannibal had mourned.

He'd mourned in violence and blood.

"And maybe some peach tea, Han." Will continued, eyes fluttering open, reaching forward to undo the man's tie. He left it on the vanity, moving to undo his vest, now.

"I have not made that in quite some time, Darling. I do not want to butcher a meal you love so dearly." Hannibal allowed Will to undress his top-half, standing to begin drawing the bath, leaving the rest of his clothes for later removal. He removed the cork from a glass bottle containing a pearlescent liquid, watching as he dripped into the bath, bubbles forming. When there was an appropriate amount of bubbles Hannibal pushed the cork back in, setting it down, a bottle of lavender oil replacing it.

The boy watched, still seated on the stool. "Your cooking is brilliant, Hannibal. Please, I have missed the simple Southern comforts more than you can imagine. I'd eat it no matter what." Will promised, lips pulled into a perfect pout, tears sitting behind the wells of his eyes. He sniffled, forever manipulative.

The older man sighed, returning the bath products back to their rightful place. "Alright, darling boy. Though, you cannot complain if it tastes vile." Hannibal's lips quirked into a smile, his hands reaching for his belt, trousers falling to the floor in seconds. He reached,

folded them, setting them down before removing his sock garters, socks and silken underwear. Now, as naked as the day he was born, Hannibal helped Will into the warm water. “Sit in the middle, allow me to come behind you.” he hummed, lips pressed to the boy’s temple. Will did as told, knees to his chest as he settled in the centre of the bath, waiting for the shift in water. Hannibal sunk down. He pulled Will close, back pressed to furred chest. He buried his nose in the crook of Will’s neck, taking a deep breath.

“I saw you made some friends today,” Hannibal spoke quietly, not wanting to disturb their intimacy. “Alana and Margot are lovely young women.”

“They are,” Will relaxed completely, head lulling backwards, resting on Hannibal’s broad shoulder. He closed his eyes, taking a deep breath. A question danced in his mind, quickly deciding that Hannibal was a safe space. “Did Margot kill her brother, Hannibal?”

Ah, Mason Verger.

Hannibal had felt nothing when the young man’s death was announced. Nothing at all. He hummed quietly, considering. Most everyone was aware of the strange relationship shared between the Verger siblings, but they never spoke a word about it. When his death was announced, people simply accepted that his tumble into the pig pen was accidental. Tragic, but an accident nonetheless. “Yes, I believe so.” Hannibal finally responded, large hands circling Will. “It’s entirely unconfirmed as there was no investigation. However, as an *old head doctor*, I am to believe that she saved herself.”

“Saved herself?” Will repeated, frowning gently. “He abused her?”

“Yes, smart boy.” Hannibal, again, kissed Will’s temple. He reached for a washcloth and lavender soap, intending to wash the boy. “It was something that people in our circle were aware of, but said nothing on the matter. If you were to ask me, I’d say it was the right thing to do...to kill Mr. Verger.”

Surprisingly, Will nodded, lifting his arms for Hannibal to lather in soap. “I agree...I like this soap, it smells wonderful.” Will ended the conversation then, changing topics easily.

Privately, Hannibal smiled. Although the murder was completely circumstantial and, in a way, deserved, Will seemed to accept it with open arms. He planned on continuing his friendship with Margot. “It does. I thought you might like it...I shall miss the smell of wild lavender during these winter months. Lean back, dear, let me wash your hair.”

Will did as told, closing his eyes.

—

Darkness had long taken over when their pampering session came to an end. Bath empty, both dried, Hannibal insisted on brushing Will’s curls. He wrapped the long strands around his fingers to help them keep their shape, massaging a sweet smelling mousse into them. Will felt spoilt beyond compare.

Whilst he had taken other lovers in his short life, none had taken quite as much interest in him as Hannibal. In fact, Will wasn’t even sure any of them could point to a Clit on a medical diagram, even if their life and fortune depended on it. He had been taken on dates, but only ever with the expecting of sexual favours by the end of it. Hannibal, however, simply wanted to dote on Will and expected nothing in return.

“I’ll meet you in the study, Han.” Will hummed, smoothing out the silken fabric of Hannibal’s pyjamas. Even alone, readying for an evening of relaxation, Hannibal still dressed to the nines. He leant to press a kiss under the man’s circular reading glasses, giving his arm a squeeze before taking his leave to get dressed himself.

Hannibal smiled to himself, fingers brushing over the spot on his cheek where warmth still danced. He sighed, making his way into the study, dropping to his knees to fill the fireplace with small pieces of wood. He tossed matches into the small pile, watching as flames licked and sparked, soon filling the study with a pleasant warmth and glow.

The soft patter of footsteps and the closing of the study door alerted Hannibal that Will had returned. He gazed over his shoulder, mouthing falling open just a touch, lashes fluttering at the sight presented to him.

An angel, Hannibal was sure.

There, he stood, in the gentle glow created by the fire, with a smile on his sweet lips. Will's curls fell effortlessly into his face, shadowing the blush that lay on his cheeks, wearing nothing but a sheer, lace nightgown, much shorter than any of the other ones he owned. The rest of him was completely bare, milky thighs and delicate legs on display for Hannibal. *Only Hannibal.*

"Darling," Hannibal breathed, shifting so that his whole body was facing Will. "This is such a treat. For what do I owe the pleasure?"

Will giggled, his hand coming to cover his mouth, coy. "You are so formal, Hannibal. Do you like it?" He asked, making his way across the room, kneeling on the soft rug in front of the older man.

The smell of lavender mixed with wood as Will took his seat on the floor, invading Hannibal's nostrils wonderfully. His hand came to settle on Will's hip, drawing him closer. "I do not like it, Will. I *love* it, you look ravishing." Hannibal purred, dipping his head to press kisses to Will's pretty throat, delighting in the moans it produced.

"Are you...going to *ravish* me?" Will whispered, breathy and sweet. He guided Hannibal's hand from his hip, welcoming it under the fabric until it found its home pressed against Will's cunt. Wet, warm, perfect. Will rocked his hips into Hannibal's large hand, whining. "Please, Hannibal."

"Sweet, sweet boy..." Hannibal groaned, his cock twitching to life behind silk. "Lay down for me, darling. I'd like to taste you."

Another soft noise escaped Will at the request, quickly reaching to grab a pillow from the nearby armchair. He lay down, as told, shoving the pillow under his head for support. Will could already feel his thighs shaking with anticipation, the intricate lace of his nightgown falling to gather on his stomach. He spread his legs. He rolled his hips, inviting Hannibal. Hannibal didn't need to be asked twice, using his large hands to push Will's legs even further apart, making room for himself.

Whilst they had done this before, Hannibal enjoyed taking his time, as if it were the first and last time he'd be tasting Will. He nuzzled into Will's thigh, taking a deep breath, committing the smell and sight to memory - only after did he finally do as promised. Hannibal dragged the flat of his tongue up Will's wanting cunt, tongue guiding him open, circling around the hardening nub of his clit. He groaned, tongue delving back down to slip inside of the boy's hole, tasting from the source.

"*O-Oh !*" Will gasped, back arching from the rug. His hands flew into Hannibal's messy hair, tugging and scratching just lightly. "Y-Yes, like that..." he mewled, uncaring as to if anyone heard. Hannibal made him feel so good and he wanted that known. A single digit replaced his tongue, not wanting to leave Will's hole unoccupied whilst he tortured his clit.

Unruly curls flew as Will's head tossed from side to side, toes splaying and curling beautifully. He pulled at Hannibal's hair harder, urging the man to suckle his hardened clit even more. It hurt, just a little, but Will loved every second of it. The boy practically howled when one finger suddenly became three, stretching him open perfectly, forcing a flood of filthy curses to fall from his bitten lips.

"Darling, watch your mouth." Hannibal chuckled, chin wet, cheeks flushed. He kissed Will's thigh, moving his fingers at a steady pace, hooking them upwards. "Look at you... Your pretty cunt is already swollen, sweet boy. It's practically sucking my fingers inside. Sit up. Take a look."

Whining, Will propped himself up onto his elbows, looking down at where their bodies met. "Hannibal..." Will looked through his lashes, rolling his hips to meet the older man's movements. "I want you inside of me, please. I need you. I missed you so much today."

The older man marvelled in the way Will's pussy gaped just slightly when he removed his fingers, bringing them to his mouth to suck them clean. "You need not beg, sweet." Hannibal purred, hands bracketing Will's head, hovering over him. Their lips met in a passionate kiss, all teeth and tongue and Will's delicious taste. "You'll never have to miss me again." He promised, pulling away to discard his pyjama shirt, tossing it to make a new home on the armchair.

Hannibal didn't want to wait much longer, simply releasing his drooling cock from the confines of his bottoms, a wet patch left on the fabric. "Look at how hard you make me, darling boy. How much my body needs you...for without it I might wither and die."

“Oh, Hannibal! Just fuck me already, you blabbering fool!” Will cried, his sweet laughs filling the study, adding to the warmth created by the fire. Although Hannibal found swearing distasteful, he couldn’t help but smile down at Will, one large hand coming to caress his face. Will opened his mouth again to complain, swiftly cut off by a wail of pleasure as Hannibal’s cockhead pushed inside his wanting cunt.

All words died on Will’s tongue in the moment, his mind drawing a complete blank, focusing on nothing but pleasure. The memory of his parents, all those evil and selfish boys, everything bad that had happened...faded. He wrapped his legs around Hannibal’s middle, urging him deeper with the press of his heel. Hannibal obliged, taking his time to bottom out, ignoring the deepening urge to pound into the boy.

“How...does that feel, Darling?” Hannibal ground out after a moment, sounding breathless already. He rolled his hips, delighting in the pretty sounds Will blessed him with, rewarding the boy with a slow thrust. “You feel devine, Will. You’re mine, so you understand?”

Will nodded, hands pressed to Hannibal’s chest, clinging to him desperately. Tears sparkled in the boy’s eyes, threatening to spill down rosy cheeks. “Y-Yes, Hannibal. You’re mine, too...Please, make me feel good.” He whined, moving his legs to rest his ankle on Hannibal’s shoulders, practically folding himself in half for the man.

Their new position allowed for a new found deepness, forcing Hannibal just a fraction deeper inside the boy. Without wasting any more time, Hannibal began to move, his thrusts slow and deep to begin with. It didn’t take long for that to change, his thrusts becoming harder, more desperate, more eager to please as Will continued to moan and babble. He swore, begged, kissed Hannibal’s neck and jaw, clawed onto him like he might float away if he let go.

Hannibal’s own pleased sounds melted with Will’s, singing his praise from the rooftops. He mumbled in Lithuanian, French, Italian, Spanish, German. Any language he knew. Hannibal moved faster, his hands moving to Will’s hips, cock throbbing inside of the boy’s pretty little hole.

“Cl-Close! I-I feel close!” Will cried, reaching down to touch at his swollen clit, moaning prettily from the added pleasure. Hannibal allowed it, angling his thrusts to hit the boy’s G-spot more accurately, desperate to watch him come undone. It took less than a minute for the

waves of Will's orgasm to crash down over him, swallowing him into a sea of blinding pleasure. His legs trembled, body both tense and twitching as it wracked through him, leaving him a moaning and pleading mess. Pleading for what, he wasn't actually sure.

"Oh, rotten boy ..." Hannibal moaned, fucking Will through his powerful orgasm. A smile flooded his pleased face, the heat from the fire urging his body to sweat. No one else had made Will come so easily, so intensely, and that made Hannibal's heart soar. He continued to pound into the boy, ready to pull out and come when it all became too much to handle. However, when he began moving away to do so, slender legs flew to trap him in place, holding him inside Will's hot body.

The boy shook his head, rolling his hips and whining, the waves of his orgasm much smaller now. His heels dug into Hannibal's back, cunt tightening around his thick cock, begging him silently. Hannibal's body betrayed him, orgasm punching the wind out of him as he flooded the evil boy beneath him. The man whimpered, hips rocking as his cock was milked, come spilling, running down Will's blushed crack. He snared softly, pulling out before he could fuck his release deeper into the boy.

Will, spoiled, rotten, sweet Will, looked in awe. He reached a hand down, swiping the leaking come onto his fingers, bringing it to his mouth. *"Th-That felt amazing."* He breathed, fingers clean once more. Hannibal's mind felt too clouded to care about the issue that could materialise, focused on guiding Will into relaxation. He'd remind Will that, however much he wanted it, cream-pies were off limit for a good reason.

"You always feel amazing, Darling." Hannibal crooned, carefully switching their positions, bringing Will to lay on his chest. Will did just that, gazing into the burning embers, the fire much smaller now.

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Silence fell, comfortable and thick. Will traced shapes into Hannibal's chest hair, the lace of his nightgown keeping him grounded, denying him the opportunity to drift away. The thoughts of his family came back, but they were less intense than before. The fire crackled, illuminating only them.

“Do you miss your family, Hannibal?” Will spoke, tiredness teasing out his southern drawl. He looked up at the man through his lashes, watching for his expression to change.

Hannibal sighed, the arm around Will tightening, drawing him in closer. He was quiet for a minute more, “I miss my mother, though, had she not died when she did, she still would not be here today. I miss my sister, too. There are many things I wished to show her in life, she was taken too soon.”

Tears twinkled behind Hannibal’s lashes, but they didn’t fall. He blinked, looking at Will, waiting. “Do...they ever visit you? I dream about my mother every night...her face is never really there but I know it’s her. Sometimes, I can smell her.”

“My mother, no. Mischa...I have dreamt about my whole life. Her screams. How she clung to me and begged me to save us both. I have dreamt of chasing her until my legs removed themselves from my body,” Hannibal brushed his fingers through Will's hair, soothing them both. “However, she visits me no more. With you in my life, her soul can now rest somewhere eternal, instead of waiting for me. I know, one day, that we shall be together again. Brother and sister. For now, she watches, unafraid and happy.”

Will smiled, a sad and happy thing, tears twinkling behind his own long lashes. He leant to kiss Hannibal’s jaw, settling back down on his chest. “Mischa...What a beautiful name. Might you ask her to keep my parents company? Whilst they wait for us...I fear they might become lonesome without someone to care for.” He mumbled, eyelids heavy with sleep.

“I can certainly ask, darling boy. They won’t be alone.” Hannibal promised with a gentle kiss to Will’s curls, watching with adoration as the boy's lashes fluttered closed, sleep pulling him under.

There, in Hannibal’s arms, come leaking from his used body, Will fell asleep. He sighed softly, nose pressed into the man’s chest hair. Hannibal didn’t move. He didn’t dare to, even if the floor was uncomfortable and their bed wasn’t far away, he didn’t dare move. He played with Will’s curls, tucking the whole evening away in his memory palace, committing Will’s appearance to memory for his sketchbooks.

He closed his eyes, allowing the comforting warmth and Will’s quiet breathing to lull him under. He fell asleep, setting out to fulfil his promise to Will.

Chapter Eight

Chapter Notes

WARNING S/A IS FEATURED IN THEI CHAPTER. THIS IS YOUR WARNING!!
Forced kissing, groping.

If you DONT wish to read that, but still want to read the chapter, I have marked the scene where it happens. The scene will begin with ‘+++++’ and the end will be marked with the same ‘+++++’

This was your warning. If you choose to read it, then you’ve chosen to read it.

“I think we should match,” Will broke their comfortable silence with a smile, his arm interlocked with Georgias. The girl had protested the trip into town, promising Will that she *didn’t need to go* and that *it was just too expensive*. Will, as stubborn as ever, was having none of it. “I think it would be just darling if we did, don’t you? I can picture it now! Beautiful blues and whites or the deepest crimson and white!”

The young girl laughed, shaking her head at just how ridiculous Will Graham could be. She sighed, giving his arm a gentle squeeze as they headed inside a little boutique. “You, Will, were made for such an extravagant life, you know? You’ll look like a princess in whatever you decide... You don’t have to be brought down...” Georgia’s smile faded just slightly, her eyes cast downward. The store was filled to the brim with beautiful things, crafted from fabrics that Georgia usually wouldn’t dream of buying. Necklaces. Gloves. Rings. Earrings.

Soft hands came to cup the girl's face, thumbs brushing her blushed cheekbones. “Oh, Cher, you were made to be a princess, too. You ain’t got nothin’ to worry about, you hear me? Let me treat you. Enjoy yourself and forget whatever it is you’re worrying about.” Will’s voice took on a thicker drawl, a motherly tone weaving its way into his already- sweet voice. “Let’s have a look and then we’ll go for lunch.”

Georgia nodded. Will nodded back, taking her hands in his own. They walked around the boutique in comfortable silence, pausing occasionally to look at dresses. Although they were beautiful, Will wasn’t sure they would be quite good enough for Fredrick Chilton’s ball. Though, he doubted a dress made from golden thread would be good enough. Will continued

to walk further into the back, his eyes filling with wonder when he spotted a gorgeous, corseted dress. It stood, unappreciated and unworn, squeezed away in the corner. Lace and ribbons decorated the dazzling dress, small beads that dusted the neck, glinting under the low light of the store. It was tiered, giving the waist an elegant shape, no doubt accentuated by the corset. The sleeves were slightly wider and, although it wasn't exactly a style that was all the rage, Will *needed* it.

"Oh, my Lords!" Will gasped dreamily, hand over his heart. He let go of Georgia's hand to examine the dress further, taking note of all the different shades of blues and creams. "It's beautiful, don't you think? It would look beautiful on you, Cher. I would have one made for myself in a darker blue and cream..." His slender fingers came to touch the pearls that were crafted into a beautiful, choker-style necklace, creating teardrop shapes.

For a moment, Georgia wanted to protest. She saw all the beads, no doubt hand sewn, and wanted to fight her right to wear them. The ribbon and lace were not something she had ever worn. Of course, she had gowns, but none so beautiful. Then, Will's words ran true in her mind. "It's absolutely stunning, Will. Spiffy, dare I say." She giggled, shyly joining Will in examining the dress further. "Will it be ready in time for the event?"

"I'll pay handsomely to have it crafted as quickly as possible. Excuse me, I need to speak with the owner." Will gave a playful wink, sauntering off to make a deal, leaving the girl to shop around more.

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The pair left the Boutique in a fit of giggles, carrying two bags each - containing matching gloves, necklaces, earrings and hair pieces. Will had to convince Georgia to get them, insisting that they'd look foolish without the right accessories.

"We shall have the whole day to pamper ourselves before getting ready," Will explained, their arms interlocked once more. "I'll insist that Hannibal give you the full day off, of course. We shall have luxurious baths, paint our nails and do each other's make-up." He giggled, his eyes twinkling as he talked.

Georgia nodded in agreement, a bright smile lightening up her face. The worry and insecurity had melted away, making room for excitement and wonder. She had a real friend, no matter

what. “That does sound truly wonder-“

“Will Graham!” The voice of a young, British man cut Georgia off entirely, a mop of curls appearing before them. Antony smiled, his eyes only ever meeting Will’s, blatantly ignoring the girl next to him. “Isn’t it wonderful to see you around here? What might you be up to?”

Will giggled, his hand coming to cover his mouth. Truthfully, Will hadn’t recognised the young man for a moment or two, needing the time to giggle to truly think. *Antony*. He hummed, hand moving to Georgia’s. “My girlfriend and I are out for an afternoon ‘bout the town. I am surprised to see you, a women’s Boutique doesn’t quite seem like your scene.” Will quipped, his thinly plucked eyebrow rising in playful, *mocking*, curiosity.

Antony laughed, hand resting over the expensive fabric of his button-down, shaking his head. “Ah, you’ve caught me! No, I’m simply in the market for a new pair of dress shoes for the upcoming party. I’m assuming I’ll see you there?” He made no effort to address Georgia once again, speaking as though she wasn’t in the same town. Without a doubt, Antony got under Georgia’s skin. There was something about him, something itchy and wrong, akin to the feeling of small bugs on skin. Embarrassed, she said nothing.

“Well, I suppose *we* should be on our way, then. Good luck with your endeavour, Antony. *We* shall see you in a fortnight.” Will nodded, gently moving Georgia out of the way, walking down the street. “What an imbecile.” He whispered, squeezing Georgia’s hand gently.

Georgia frowned gently, looking over her shoulder to spot Antony staring at Will. He looked slimy, his eyes squinted into beady little things, tongue sticking out to lick his lips. Wrong. Wrong. Antony was wrong. However, she said nothing, not wanting to ruin the lovely day they were having with her negativity. She schooled her expression, forgetting all about it when they finally settled to have lunch.

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Will sighed softly as he settled into the large armchair of Hannibal’s study, a book in hand. He’d long since changed out of his beautiful clothing, instead slipping into one of Hannibal’s sweaters and a pair of sleep shorts. It was early evening and the sun was beginning to set, a golden hue settling across the room, casting shadows. Will had propped a window open to enjoy the gentle breeze and the song of birds, the rustle of leaves in the distance.

“Did you enjoy your trip, darling boy?” Hannibal’s voice interrupted his reading, building a dam in the stream of his imagination. He stood behind the chair, chin on the back, arms wound to rest on his lover's slender shoulders.

Closing his book, Will tilted his head to look up at the man. “I most certainly did, Hannibal. You will love my dress, it is beautiful...Georgia’s, too.” He smiled, soft and pretty. “We had a good lunch, too. I even bumped into a new friend.”

Hannibal raised a light eyebrow, “A new friend?”

“Yes. We met at Chilton’s little...pre-party party.” He hummed, nuzzling Hannibal’s wrist gently. “Antony Dimmond. He’s from across the pond but has just come from Europe. He’ll be attending the Ball.”

An uncomfortable feeling settled in Hannibal’s stomach, coating his throat with a sour taste. His expression was unreadable, thankfully, hiding the beginnings of jealousy perfectly. A part of him knew he had nothing to worry about. A part of him also knew what Will was like before.

“Would you like to join me for some tea, dear?” Hannibal asked, ending their conversation on the matter of Antony Dimmond swiftly. “I had some new flavours imported for you to try.”

“You spoil me.” Will smiled brightly, setting his book on the side table before standing. “I would love to join you for tea, Cher. I’d love it even more if there was cake to go with it.”

Hannibal chuckled, shaking his head. Will giggled, lacing their fingers together. “You and your sweet tooth.”

Although Georgia had insisted she could get ready alone, Will would not have it. He spent the morning washing the girl's long hair whilst she bathed, talking quietly with her about his life before. The naughty things Will Graham got up to before he fell in love. They talked about Georgia, too. Her mother and siblings, how much she missed them but deeply enjoyed working for Hannibal Lecter all the same.

Will left her alone to wash her body, giving the girl access to all his fancy soaps and oils. Whilst she washed up, Will pulled their dresses from the wardrobe he now shared with Hannibal. They had arrived just in time and were absolutely perfect, shining and sparkling under the light. He placed them to hang, removing the dust covers that protected them.

“Oh my goodness!” Georgia gasped as she emerged from the connecting bathroom, wrapped tightly in fluffy towels. “Oh, Will! They are gorgeous...they look so perfect. Did they arrive today?” She asked, her eyes sparkling just as bright as the bejewelled dresses.

He shook his head, “They arrived yesterday evening. I had Hannibal hang them for me so I could keep them a surprise until now. Aren't they just darling? You're going to look, dare I say, sexy!”

The young woman giggled, playfully swatting Will on the arm. “You are a filthy little harlot, Will Graham! Sexy is a word reserved for nude women and Speakeasy dancers!”

“Do you have much experience with Speakeasy Dancers, Georgia?” Will laughed brightly, wiggling his brows in her direction as he swayed his hips invitingly.

“Oh, that is Devilish!”

“Better the Devil you know, Cher.” He winked, retrieving the robe from his closet. “I'm going to bathe now, hm? There is some nail paint on my vanity. Please, pick any one you'd like.” Will smiled as he walked off into the bathroom, leaving the door open as he began running himself a bath, filling it with bubbles and oils. He had given Hannibal strict instructions to leave them in peace during their preparations unless there was a grave emergency.

Georgia smiled as she picked a nude polish from the selection, settling on the velvet stool to paint her toes and fingers. Whilst part of her still believed that she was undeserving of Will's gifts and kindness, she could not deny that the whole ordeal was incredibly fun. She allowed her toes to dry whilst she moved onto her fingers, using a file to neaten them. Soon, Will returned wrapped snugly in a towel, fiddling with pin curlers, letting out breathy obscenities.

"Sit, let me help." Georgia stood up, motioning to the stool with a soft smile. She took the pins from the boy's hands as he settled, shaking her head. "Silly. You have the most gorgeous hair already, Will. Many would kill to be as effortless as you."

"Flower," Will sighed, relaxing as she worked her fingers through his slightly dampened curls. "I simply wanted thicker ringlets for tonight, you see. I was hoping to achieve a slightly vintage look...like my Mother used to wear. I miss her more so tonight, oddly."

The young maid nodded, not able to fully understand but sympathise nonetheless. "I can do vintage, Will. You'll look stunning. I'm sure Hannibal will spend the evening fighting off other men." She laughed.

Will giggled, turning his head slightly for better access, "You joke, but I am sure he would beat the ever-loving hell out of anyone that dared touch me...Hell, I bet he wished he'd beaten Randall Tier."

"I heard he can be quite possessive," she bit her lip, rolling hair between her fingers, pinning them in place. "Before you came there was another maid that often gossiped about his mysterious past."

"Well, isn't that interesting?" Will smiled, reaching to apply his moisturiser, "You've given me something to tease him about. Don't worry, Doll, I won't tell him I heard it from you."

The relief was visible in Georgia, her shoulders relaxing and easy smile returning. She finished the rest of Will's hair in silence, pulling up another chair to the vanity for her to settle into. Will reached to play a record for them, soft music filling the comfortable silence between them.

Gentle chatter soon returned as they continued to pretty themselves for the evening, occasionally pausing to help one another with certain steps in their routine. Will didn't wear much makeup, simply choosing to rosy his cheeks and put some colour onto his eyelids, painting his lashes with dark mascara, making them appear more cow-like. He felt gorgeous, a simple beauty that deserved to be treasured. He felt closer to his mother more than ever, beautifying himself in the mirror, hair pressed into pinned ringlets. He had seen her get ready in such a manner many times before.

Will missed her terribly. Tonight, as much as he wished otherwise, would be a challenge. He slipped into soft lingerie when the time drew closer to leave, asking for Georgia's help with his dress. She obliged, turning around for Will to help her when she was done. They fingered on their gloves, draping beautiful pearls across their spenders necks.

"We look..." Georgia began, looking at them in the large mirror.

"Beautiful." Will finished, reaching to hold her hand in his own, clutching onto her. "We look beautiful, Georgia. I feel it...don't you?"

She nodded, believing more in her beauty now. "I do. I cannot thank you enough for this, Will. I...I have never had such a dear friend." Georgia's eyes shine with the promise of tears.

The boy reached out to touch her cheek, smiling. "Don't cry, lest you ruin that beautiful makeup. Which, might I say, I did a bloody fantastic job with!"

His smile was infectious, worming its way onto the girl's face easily. "Oh, you awful thing! I think it's time for us to be going..."

"Yes, we'll take a car of our own." Will winked, linking their arms together before he began making his way downstairs. He always preferred to take the stairs when he wore something fanciful, basking in the way everyone stopped to gaze at him. This time was no different, except that the eyes weren't just on him. "Hannibal can ride separately. This is all about us."

Hannibal, as handsome as ever, waited at the foot of the staircase. He wore an intricate and finely made suit set in matching colours to Will. It was decorated with beads and sparkly

things, but still managed to look effortlessly classy. Hannibal had chosen his favourite cufflinks, rings and watch to accessorise with, preening himself like a peacock. Though, he only had eyes for Will. Circular glasses settled on the bridge of his nose, allowing him to take in Will's beauty fully.

It took his breath away, heart beating in an irregular way that always made his stomach turn. He had seen Will in plenty of beautiful dresses and other clothing. Tonight, however, was different. The air around them felt different. Something danced between them like electricity.

"You look absolutely breathtaking, my darling boy. Words cannot describe how much you shine and shimmer...this is a truly perfect moment." He professed, pressing a kiss to the boy's blushed cheek. Hannibal reached for Georgia's hand, bending to kiss it. "You look beautiful, too. I must say, dear. Thank you for accompanying my darling Will this evening."

"It is no problem, Count." She flushed, smiling gently.

Will chuckled, bringing Hannibal's attention back to him. "We'll be driving there alone, if you don't mind. I asked one of the other drivers to take us."

Hannibal blinked, his smile still there. "Of course. I shall meet you there, then. We will be together soon." He nodded, watching as the pair left, following soon behind them.

The ride was spent in silence, anticipation and excitement heavy in the air as they drew closer, slowing their speed once they were at the driveway. Bright lights signalled the way, tasteful but ever so dramatic as Will had all but expected from Chilton. Cars of all shapes and sizes filled the sizable parking area neatly, parked, of course, by ' *the help* '. Young men dressed in perfectly matching suits helped to guide people inside, taking their coats and clutches with dashing smiles and kind words. Music, produced most definitely by a live band, drifted into the evening air through open doors.

Once their car was temporarily parked outside the stairs that led to the entrance, their doors were open as gloved-hands were extended to them. Will took one with a smile, gracefully removing himself from his seat, thanking the kind young man with a smile and soft, "Thank you."

He waited patiently for Georgia to join him at his side, smiling softly when he saw Hannibal approach them as well. Hannibal moved to stand between the two beauties of the evening, offering up each elbow with a smile that could only be described as ‘panty droppingly deadly’. Will took his elbow with a soft laugh, happy when Georgia mirrored him.

“You look dashing tonight, Hannibal...” Will smiled, an unruly curl falling into his face. “Oh, my! Doesn’t Madam Nicholas look just gorgeous tonight? Everyone looks so...”

“Perfect.” Georgia finished, her eyes lighting up as they entered the Ballroom. Whilst the party had just begun, it was already in full swing. People danced and laughed, drinks in hand, smiles plastered onto faces. Whilst Chilton’s Ballroom was not quite as large as Hannibal’s own, it was made to look just as beautiful. That man, as incredulous as he could be, knew how to throw a party.

The soft *tap* of a walking cane alerted Hannibal of their hosts arrival, looking to his left to spot an immaculately dressed and beaming, Frederick Chilton. “My, My, My! And what do I owe the pleasure of having *two* beautiful young things in my presence? Will, you did not tell me that this friend of yours was straight out of a painting...” He carefully took Georgia’s hand in his own, pressing a small kiss to her fingers. Chilton moved to do the same to Will, studying the details of his dress.

Will laughed, detaching himself from Hannibal, both hands holding onto Chilton. “You look wonderful yourself, Doctor. You have made this place look wonderful, I must say.” He complimented genuinely, seemingly a little more patient than usual. “Georgia is very beautiful, yes. And I’m quite sure she’d like a drink... Why don’t you take her to get one, hm?”

“Oh, yes!” Chilton righted himself, greeting Hannibal with a handshake and a smile before his attentions were back on Georgia. “Let’s get you a drink, dear.”

“Lead the way, Doctor Chilton.” Georgia replied, soft and shy as she spoke. She looked over to Will for reassurance, rolling her eyes and laughing when she was thrown a simple and slightly crude *thumbs up*.

Once the pair were far enough away, Will leaned gently against Hannibal, looking up at him through darkened lashes. “Georgia will be shown a splendid time...They’ll drink and dance. I want to dance with you, please?”

Who was Hannibal to deny Will? He was a weakened man around him, following him effortlessly onto the dance floor. “I fear I might step on your toes, Darling. I am quite distracted by a beautiful young thing this evening.”

“Oh?” Will raised a thinly pencilled brow, smiling. “And what might they look like, Doctor Lecter?”

“Of, the most beautiful creature to ever exist.” Hannibal sighed, his hands assuming position, falling into an easy waltz. “Many would fall at his feet and weep for an evening in his arms. He shines brighter than any light, artificial or nature-made. It’s as if this Ball were thrown just for him...no one has been able to look away.”

Will felt himself blush as Hannibal spoke, a dark pink creeping across his neck and up his cheeks, darkening the makeup he already wore. Hannibal’s words were spoken with reverence, soft and adoring in every sense of the word. He meant them. They weren’t simply emotional foreplay to pull Will into bed. They were not a scam to get Will bent into all kinds of uncomfortable positions. They were, simply putting it, words and nothing more. It meant a great deal to Will.

He chuckled, “This boy must be very special to you. Why is it you are dancing with me and not him?”

“Dear boy,” Hannibal laughed softly, his nose pressed against warm curls. “He is already in my arms and in my heart. We share the same bed and I feed him food from my fingers. I make sure he is dressed in the finest of silks and the most perfect pearls. Dear boy, I see no one but you in my heart. I fear I might go mad with just how strongly I love you.” The look on Hannibal’s face was one of true adoration, eyes crinkled softly, lips turned into a tender smile.

The boy felt himself melt, his eyes welling with tears as the older man spoke. Although Will knew that he was plenty beautiful, Will occasionally struggled to believe that other people truly thought that. That their attractions weren't built purely from lust. To hear it, spoken so tenderly from Hannibal's lips, it was breathtaking. He refused to let his tears fall, mindful of the makeup that painted his eyes and cheeks. Will Graham would not be muddied with tears, especially not so early in the evening. In an effort to stop himself from crying, Will bowed gently, "I am going to get some fresh air, Darlin," He smiled, stepping away.

Whilst he wished to spend the whole evening with Will on his hip, Hannibal was happy to let his darling boy catch his breath and have a moment alone. He'd be damned if he scared the sweet thing off. He watched fondly as Will floated away in his gorgeous dress, ruffles and lace bouncing as he walked off to get himself a drink. With Will out of his sights, Hannibal turned his attention to a group of acquaintances, flashing a devilish smile as he embedded himself in the conversation.

"My, My...Don't you look quite the picture," Will had just about wrapped his lips around the rim of his champagne glass, the sweet smelling liquid barely teasing his tongue. He sighed, turning around to greet the familiar voice that had pulled him from his brief alone time. There, dressed to the tens, was Antony Dimmond, his curls styled beautifully, skin glowing, whiskey tumblr nestled between slender fingers. He looked handsome, undeniably so. He *knew* how handsome he looked, almost revoltingly so.

Will blinked, flashing a pretty little smile. "Antony! Oh, this old thing? Yes, I merely pulled it from the depths of my wardrobe," he joked, watching as the young man's face split into a grin, revealing pearly teeth. "I am surprised you actually made an appearance to this thing. Surely, someone as popular as you, must have much better plans."

Antony laughed, shaking his head, ever amused. "Why, and miss the chance to see Chilton bend over backwards to please every guest? I wouldn't miss it for the world...Though, I must admit that he seems rather taken with that girl you brought on your arm." He hummed, tossing his gaze to where the host and Georgia were dancing, moving fluidly amongst the sea of equally beautifully dressed guests. And, my, did Georgia look beautiful. Her painted lips pulled back into a smile, hair pinned just perfectly to frame her delicate face.

However, Will didn't get to enjoy that imagine for long. " *That girl* has a name, Mr Dimmond. Whilst I appreciate that your smooth brained mind might not be powerful enough to retain such information, it is not hard to learn a few simple syllables. Truly, has your time away stripped you from all of your manners and politeness?" Will's tongue was sharp and whipping, despite the soft and sweet tone of his voice. He would not make a scene by barking

out at the young man before him. Will wasn't quite sure that he would even deserve the energy.

Clearly taken aback by being put in his place, Antony simply held his mouth open, bright eyes trailing Will as he aborted their conversation. However, he would not let Will Graham slip from his grip quite so quickly. Before Will could disappear from his view completely, Antony followed behind him, unsurprised when Will took a turn to head out to the mostly empty garden. Ridiculous boy. The sun kissed the horizon as it settled more fully, casting an orange glow across the immaculately kept garden. Soon, it would be dark.

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"You are unrelenting!" Will huffed, tossing a look over his shoulder. He had felt Antony following him, hoping desperately that he would simply get bored of the chase, as men his age often did.

A sickeningly charming smile flashed his way, "I fear that I just cannot help myself when I am in your presence, Will Graham. Why is it that you must go to an event with Hannibal Lecter, the old soul, when I am staring you right in the eye? Hmm? Surely, a man his age cannot keep up with your wants and needs?"

And, there it was.

There it was again. Antony had no interest in simply being friends with Will, how incredibly stupid of him to believe so, even if the thought itself was fleeting. He cringed, sticking up his nose as he took a step back. Had he not worn blush that evening, all the colour would've drained from his face within an instant, his back pressed up against the wall of Chilton's grand home. Chilton's beautiful home, with a wonderful party, with *his* Hannibal Lecter waiting inside. The thought to run was just as fleeting as the thought of friendship, his hips encased with hands that did not belong.

Oh, and how wrong it felt.

They melted through the fabric of his custom gown, dissolving his skin into a puddle of sticky sludge, hammering through his bones until they turned to dust. It was revolting. The

feeling of lips on his neck were equally disgusting, pulling a halted whimper from Will's trembling lips.

"Antony!" he all but mewled, the sound pathetic and meek on his tongue. He squirmed, yelping as a leg was pushed between his own thighs, rumpling the fabric of his dress.

The hands on his hips moved to cup his face, smearing the blush on his cheeks. They were soft and much smaller than Hannibal's. They were wrong. Wrong! "Hush, beautiful." he purred, eyes fluttering closed, lips sealing the fate of this awful interaction.

Will had no choice but to close his own eyes, feeling much too sick to stare at the young man's face through this torture. His body went limp, mind slipping away to another place. A much warmer, happier place. Plump lips moved against his own, wet tongue searching the cavity of his mouth, champagne glass long forgotten in the grass. Whilst, to onlookers, Will might appear that he was enjoying himself...his body relaxed, brows knitted together, lipstick smudged and blurred.

It was the furthest thing from enjoyable. It was wrong and it was filthy. Antony was an unrelenting force and Will had no ide-

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"*Will?*" Will smiled softly, the honey-sweet voice flooding his mind, turning the water of his stream from black to blue. He waded towards it, the glowing light that surrounded the older man acting as a pleasant warmth.

"*Will?!*" Large, strong arms enveloped his body, pulling him close to his lover's chest. He sighed, burying his face in the safety of it.

"*William Graham!*" No. No. The voice grew louder, much too loud for the body in his arms. It bled in through the clouds, swirling in the sky as Will looked up, the water in his stream rising. He began to float away again, pulled back from the safety of whatever held him.

No.

No.

No, anything but this.

As if his eyelids were made from stone, Will slowly managed to open them, met with the vast expanse of Chilton's garden. It seemed, by the grace of Gods, that Antony had managed to escape before Hannibal could get his hands on him...though, unfortunately, he still witnessed the scene before him. It was, however, through different lenses than Will.

He had seen the way that their bodies were pressed together, a knee between Will's parted thighs, his dress rumpled and lipstick smudged. He had seen the way that they had kissed, Will's face largely obscured by Antony's trembling hands. Hannibal knew passion when he saw it. Will could only wish that he knew *one sided* passion when he saw it.

God, please let him know.

A furious hand gripped at his arm, pulling Will fully back into the moment. His glassy eyes met Hannibal's, mouth falling open in shock of what he saw there. Rage, burning and swirling. Murderous rage, sloshing around in the gorgeous brown eyes that Will so often sought comfort in. Not then. Will wasn't sure he'd be blessed with comfort from them ever again.

"What on *earth* have I walked in on?" It was spoken so low, so rough around the edges, that Will winced. It hurt more than the grip on his arm. Hannibal scanned Will's face, disgusted by what he saw. Smudged lipstick. Swollen lips. Flushed cheeks. Harlot.

Silence.

"I see. You insist on insulting me further by going mute, you brat." His words were almost spat, venom gathering in his salivary glands. "Move your feet, William. We are leaving, right this second."

Will felt his knees lock, his head shake, a frown dare to grace his lips. “G-Georgia.” he mumbled, not quite meeting the older man’s eyes. He yelped again as he was dragged around the side of the house, his heels catching occasionally, Hannibal’s grip unwavering. Hannibal’s car came into view, parked neatly. It looked safe and inviting, though Will knew that would disappear as soon as they slipped inside.

The older man scoffed, as though he couldn’t quite believe that Will was thinking about anyone other than him. Anything other than what was going on between them. “Your Maid shall have to find her own way home, I’m afraid. I am not inclined to grant you the grace of your presence at this moment.”

“Hannibal!” Will huffed as he was pushed into the back seat of the car, not deserving of the passenger seat next to Hannibal. The car smelt like his lover, plush leather seats digging into his flesh like razor blades. His skin burnt, his lips tingling. He wanted to tear at his flesh, the dress he wore no longer feeling like his own. Tears began to stream down his flushed cheeks, soft sobs escaping swollen lips as the car began to move. He could taste fury every time he breathed, the taste sour on his tongue, ripping harsher sobs from his aching throat. He could taste the utter rage pouring out of every pore, every fibre of Hannibal Lecter’s being, like some sick perfume.

Dark, dangerous eyes peered at him through the car's mirror, narrowed. He took a deep breath, exhaling another wave of rage. “How very predictable, William. It will do you no good to cry, you rotten *thing*. ”

Another weak, sad sound escaped him as he whispered; “Hannibal...”

The car fell into silence.

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